Encounter

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Alan Sillitoe

Mimic

I LEARNED to mimic at an early age, probably at two or three when I sat in front of the fire and stared at the cat. A mimic has a long memory, fine hands, and a face he can't bear to look at in the mirror, unless he puts on somebody else's to such an extent that he cannot recognise himself there. His soul is his own, but he buries it deeply with so many others because under such a mound it is finally safe. Eventually of course it is so far lost and gone that he is unable to get down to it when he wants to, but that is another matter, and finally unimportant when one knows that age and death will settle everything.

In those early days of infancy I did not know that I was becoming a mimic. By all accounts I was such a handsome baby that when my mother pushed me through town in the pram, men would stop to admire me and give her five shillings to buy me a new rattle. At least that was her story, though my memory is better than any story, for another line was that she was so pretty herself that they gave the money to me as an excuse for getting off with her.

A still further version could be that I was so rotten-faced and ugly that they gave her money out of sympathy at being loaded with such a terrible burden. Anyway, that's how she met her second husband, which only proves that mimics usually have pretty and wayward mothers, while they may be fair-to-ugly themselves. You can't be a mimic with a fine featured face, but for the first few years must stare at the world and take nothing in so that your face stays flat and putty-coloured, with a button-nose, beehive-mouth, and burdock-chin that deflects what sunlight hopes to make your features more heavenly to the world.

While father was at work and my mother in the scullery I'd romp on the rug for a while, then settle down and look at the cat, a black tabby with a white spot between its ears. I'd stare right into its splinter eyes, till it opened its great mouth and yawned. Then, facing it on all fours, I'd open my mouth as well, full of small new teeth, stretching the side skin as far as it would go. The way that cat looked at me I knew I was successful, and because of this it seemed as if I felt alive for the first time in my life. I'll never forget this strong impression. When I mimicked, the light went on, as if somebody had sneaked up behind and slyly lifted off the dark glasses I didn't have. Finally the cat walked away, as if embarrassed.

I practised on animals for years, on the assumption, rightly I think, that if I could mimic animals so that they recognised themselves in me when I was doing it in front of them, then it would be quite easy to do it to human beings when I was ready for the change-over.

I remember at the age of nine that a young woman in our yard had a puppy, a small dark fat one that had been ill, that she wanted to get rid of. So she asked me to take it to the P.D.S.A., gave me a shilling to put into their contribution box, and threepence to myself for the errand of taking it. The place was about a mile away, and going there I called in many sweet shops, buying chocolate at every stop. The puppy was

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wrapped in a towel in my arms, and after stocking up at a shop I would sit on a wall to eat the loot, and take another goz at the puppy who was going to be "put to sleep" as the woman had said. I knew of course what that meant, and though the puppy squinted at me and licked my hand when I gave it chocolate it still looked as if it might welcome what was in store for it. I stared hard at those brown eyes, at that fat half-blind face that could never have any say in how the world was run, and between one snap of chocolate and the next I'd borrow its expression, take on that look and show it to the puppy to let him feel he was not alone.

A mimic does what he is paid to do. By the time I got to the P.D.S.A. I had only threepence left for the contribution box. A shilling had gone on chocolate for me and the dog, and for the dog it was the last thing it would ever eat.

On the way home a hump-backed bridge crossed a canal. I went down through a gate on to the towpath. On the opposite side was a factory wall, but on my side was a fence and an elderberry bush. The water was bottle green, and reflected both sides in it. My eyes turned from grey to brown, and I barked as the dog had barked when the woman in the white overall had taken him from me.

II

THIS ISN'T a story about childhood. It is about a mimic, and mimics have no childhood. In fact it would almost be fair to say that they didn't even have a life of their own. There is a certain price to pay for taking on another face, another voice, even though mimicry need bring no profit. But what mimicry does give is a continuation of one's life when for some reason that life had been forfeited even before birth. Whether one had done it oneself as a spirit from another age, or whether someone in another age had got hold of your spirit before it was born and squeezed the life out of it, who can ever be able to say? One may be born innocent, but in order to make one's mark on life, one has to get rid of that innocence.

One puts one's devilries as a mimic into other people if one is guilty of what blasted one's life before birth; one takes others' devilries upon oneself if one was innocent before birth.

To borrow a face is to show no mercy to it. In order to call it your own, you leave the owner of it with nothing. Not only do you see something of an advantage in using someone else's face, but you seek to rob them of what strength they also get from wearing it. At the same time you mimic them to hide yourself. A mimic therefore can't lose, except of course that he has lost everything before birth, more than anyone else can lose unless he is a mimic too.

The first *person* I mimicked, or tried to, was my mother, and I did this by falling in love with her. This is not so easy as it sounds, especially since she had been responsible for giving me birth, but being the person with the power of life and death over me there surely wasn't any fitter person to fall in love with. But I didn't let her see it, because my way of doing it was to mimic her one day, and I expected that since she had already given me so much she wouldn't mind this at all, would be flattered by it in fact. But all she saw was that I was taking everything.

She'd just had a blinding row with my father, and he'd stormed off to see his mates in the pub. At the heartrending smash of the door behind him she sat by the fire waiting for the kettle to boil. When it did, she burst into tears. I thought to myself that if I did the same, her misery would be halved, so I put on the same expression (the half-closed eyes and twisted mouth, hands to my face-side with two fingers over my ear) and drew tears out with almost exactly the same noise. I'd meant to let my heart flow with hers, to be with it as a sort of comfort, but what I didn't know was that I'd only irritated her, mocked her—which is what she called mimicking for many years.

This barefaced imitation made it worse, though instead of increasing her tears (it could hardly do that) it stopped them altogether. This was what I had hoped for, but only in such a way as to soften her heart, not

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to harden her. She smacked my face: "Don't mock me, you little bleeder. You're almost as bad as he is." I don't need to say who "he" was, though in spite of our similarity he never became the mimic that I did.

So I mimicked my father, seeing how my attempt at love for mother had failed. It was quite a while before I stopped tormenting my mother by only mimicking my father in front of her, and began mimicking him to his face. When I did, he laughed, and I'd never seen him in such a good mood. Life is full of surprises for a mimic. He'd loosened his belt one Sunday dinner because he was too full of beer and food. He pulled me on to his knee and kissed me, my mother looking wryly over her shoulder now and again as she washed the pots. He was so pleased at my exact imitation of him, of seeing himself so clearly in me, that he gave me a shilling.

This momentary gain went to my head and, before he could fall into a doze by the fire, I thought I would put on the best show he'd seen by mimicking my mother for him. If he could laugh at himself in me, he'd be more touched than ever to see mother in my face.

I drew myself up on the hearthrug as if I were tall and thin, curved my arms outward from my side, tilted my head and drew in my cheeks, completely altering the shape of my mouth and putting that fire into my eyes that expected to be swamped out any second by a tidal wave.

"You've been a long time at the pub," I said in her voice, "don't you know your dinner's burnt? It's a wonder you couldn't smell it right from the bar."

His eyes grew small, and the smile capsized like a boat in a gale. Before I knew where I was I was flat on my face. Then a boot got me in the ribs and I was curled up by the stairfoot door.

Somehow, mimicking my mother in front of my father hadn't upset *her* at all, not like when I'd done it for her alone. In fact she was amused now, so when the old man lashed out at me with the old one-two of fist and boot, she cried and railed in my defence, calling him all the cruel gets under the sun.

"You leave my son alone," she shouted, "you drunken bully. I'll get the police in next time you kick him like that. He's never done any harm to a living soul, and you've never treated him right, either."

Father was baffled. He'd not liked me being disrespectful, he said, as if he'd been at church instead of a pub. I hadn't any right to mock her. As for him, he could stand it because it was only a bit of a joke, but he didn't like me doing it to her, the wife and mother of the house.

By this time I'd uncurled myself from the hedgehog position (I could imitate a hedgehog very well at times) and had seated myself at the table. I wasn't crying. A mimic soon learns to stop that sort of thing, otherwise he'd never do any mimicking at all. To get kicked was one of the risks you ran. And because I wasn't in tears, they soon made up their quarrel which, after all, had only started because of me. He put more coal on the fire, and she made him some fresh tea. When that was finished they talked and laughed, and she sat on his knee. Then they went upstairs together for a Sunday sleep, and I was left downstairs alone on the hearthrug wondering where I'd gone wrong. I didn't even have the energy to mimic a strong man booting the cat out of the way because things hadn't gone too well for him at work.

III

SOME PEOPLE believe that simplicity can only come out of madness, but who wants to go through madness in order to achieve the dubious advantage of becoming simple? Only a mimic can straddle these two states and so avoid being himself. That is to say, he finds a way of not searching for himself in order to avoid discovering that he has no self, and therefore does not exist. To see finally that there is nothing behind all the faces of one's existence is to find real madness. And what simplicity is there in that?

At school, I was the sort of person of whom the other boys asked: "Is it going to

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rain today?" even though I looked nothing like a sage or weatherman. But the clouds or empty sky seemed to be on my side, and I was often right when I told them one thing or the other. It wasn't so much that I could guess the weather as that I'd take a chance on saying what I thought was going to happen. This comes easy to a mimic, because every person or object that he decides to imitate has a vein of risk in it.

In my young days it took a long while for me to realise that whenever I decided to mimic someone, and actually went through the process of doing so, I was filled with a deep interest in life and did no harm to anybody. But in between times I was remote and restless in turn, and liable to delve into all kinds of mischief. If I was not inspired for weeks to mimic, and at the same time found no opportunity to otherwise work off my bilious spirit by getting into trouble, then I took ill with some current letdown of the body such as pneumonia or mumps. My father and mother would have liked to have blasted me for the bother I gave them, but after I had mimicked them successfully so early on they went out of my life forever in any important way, and I took so little notice of their rage against me that many people and other members of my family began to look on me as a saint—until my next rampage.

One Christmas at school there was a fancy-dress party before breaking up for the holidays. I went as a moth, with two great wings and white powder all over me. Some came as musketeers and spacemen, but most appeared as nothing at all, simply wearing a badge, or hat. It was an old school, but there was a stage at one end of a big classroom. I received first prize, somebody else got second, and another boy third. The other two were told to get on the stage and act out what they were supposed to be. They did their best, then I went up.

A teacher put a candle on a low table, and I became a moth, weaving around it so that everybody stopped talking and looked. Maybe the teachers told them to be quiet. It was raining in the street, and perhaps being out of it and in the warmth made it easier for me to mimic a moth, with two wings and dry powder all over me. I went round and round the candle, my eyes half closed, and the flame hardly moving. I took the moth into me, and later heard that they began to laugh. I must have known this, yet didn't know it, at the time. But I went on circling the candle, and nobody thought to stop me, to break my spell and their spell.

If life is one long quest to avoid deciding what you are, I suddenly knew that I was a moth when one whole wing was touched off by the candle.

The flame came up suddenly and without smoke, but it wasn't as swift to others as it was to me, and before more than a slight scorch was done the flame was killed stone dead by two of the teachers.

IV

EVERYBODY thought that my days of mimicking were done for good. So did I, because on that occasion it seemed to have got out of control, and though I thought I might like such a thing to happen at some time in my life, I wasn't ready for it yet.

Before leaving that part of my life forever (I still can't bring myself to call it childhood) I remember a photograph of me, that showed a big self-absorbed boy of thirteen. It was taken by an uncle, and then enlarged, and my mother had it framed and put on the sideboard in the parlour where nobody went and so hardly anybody, thank God, ever looked at it. I'd been out of her care and bother for a long long time, but she'd taken to liking me again. It made no difference, because once a decision is taken through a failure to mimic, nothing can alter it. Maybe I reminded her of my father who had long since gone and given place to another person, and who she still in some way liked. But I'd never mimic him for her, even so, though I could have done it so that the house would have crowed around us.

This photo seemed to have no connection with me, but everybody swore that it had, and that there couldn't be a better one. In

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my heart I'd come to the age where I wanted to please them, so I decided I must mimic that photo so as to become like the image on it. It wasn't long before I saw that such a thing was not feasible. If you don't know what you are, how is it possible to imitate yourself? This was the issue that burned me. I could not imitate something that had no life, not even myself if I didn't have any. And certainly judging by the photo there was no life there whatever. That was what everyone liked about it, my mother most of all, who stuck it on the sideboard in what was to her the place of honour.

Nevertheless, I looked at that photo for a long time, since other people had given it so much meaning. It was there for the world to see, above all by those who close their hearts and say: Know thyself. But I say: Get me a mirror, and according to the antics performed in it you can then (if you have that sort of desire) know everybody in the world.

But a photograph is not a mirror. You do not even see yourself as others see you. For a moment I almost went into the spirit of that photograph, but pulled myself back in time. That would have been evil. I preferred not to know what I am. There was almost triumph in that decision. If I don't know what I am, nobody can know, not even God. And if God doesn't know, then there is no God.

Rather than mimic the photograph of myself and believe in God I decided that I'd sooner be a moth.

V

BEING such a good mimic I couldn't hold down any job for long. Sooner or later the foreman was bound to turn up when I was doing an imitation of him before all my mates. I worked harder than most though because I was so self-absorbed that nothing was too difficult or arduous for me. It was always with great regret that I was sacked.

On the other hand, all women love a mimic, except the mimic's mother, who ceases to matter by the time he becomes interested in other women. If you want to get off with a woman all you have to do is talk. Let the steamroller roll, and talk, talk, talk. Flatter her if you must, but the main thing is to talk. No woman can resist a constant stream of fulsome talk, no matter how inane and irrelevant, as long as you keep it up and make her laugh. Even if she laughs at you, it doesn't matter. By that time she is softening, you can bet.

And a mimic, even if he's so much speechless putty when left alone with himself, can mimic a funny and talkative man when the need arises. Of course, when the girl falls in love she never gets what she thinks she is getting. But then, who does? There is much wisdom in the world. Certain basic rules were formulated for me by Sam England who worked in the plywood factory where I took my first job. Never, he said, marry a girl who hates her mother, because sooner or later she will start to hate you. He also added that if you want to know what your girl friend is going to look like in thirty years' time, look at her mother now. And if you want to know what your girl friend expects you to look like in *ten* years' time, look at her father.

Whenever I met a girl I had to decide, by her face and talk, and the sort of home she came from, what sort of a person she'd like me to be. There weren't many girls who could put up with a strong silent type for the first three dates while he weighed up the situation. But after that I fell into the slot, and the talk began, the endless jokes and self-revelations that come from anyone no matter what sort he is.

If I wanted to get rid of a girl, I made an abrupt change of character. None of them could stand this. They thought I had either gone mad, or lost my respect for them. In the soiled territory of the heart the precise configuration of the land only comes with continual and intense familiarity.

One girl I could not get rid of. I changed character no less than five times, but she wouldn't go away, so there was nothing I could do except marry her.

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VI

IF THERE'S one thing I've always found it hard to mimic it's a happy man. I've often been happy, but that was no help when I was indifferent and wanted to let someone else see that I was full of the joy of life. I knew that I had to overcome this problem and prayed that on this vital issue my talent for mimicry would not let me down.

In the very act of getting married, in order to appear happy to the girl I was to live with, I had to behave like a fool. When I should have slipped the ring on her finger I put it on mine—then on to hers. When we were declared married I attempted to kiss the best man, a fellow clerk from an office I was then working at. He fought free and pleaded with me not to be bloody silly, so then I kissed the bride, and apologised to everyone later by saying I'd been too happy to know what I was doing. They believed this, and forgave me, and I loved them so much I could have mimicked them all, one after another to the end of time.

When I changed character for the sixth time it was only to mimic a man getting married. That was the one character she couldn't stand, and by the time I had come to believe in the act, and had almost grown to like it, it was the one finally by which I got rid of her. When we parted six months later I did a very tolerable job of mimicking an amicable man, who had taken one step wrong in life and wanted to go two steps back. She went home to her parents, and took the television set among all her cases in the second run of the taxi. We had always made love in the most perfect way, because I'd had enough experience to mimic that like a stallion, but it had made no difference to our final feeling for each other. She'd never been able to get through to the real me, no more than I had. And after a year of trying she imagined she never would, and I couldn't help but admire her promptitude in getting out as quickly as she did.

This is not a tale of love, or the wail of a broken marriage, or a moan about impossible human relationships. I won't dwell long on any of that. I can go for years telling you what all this is *not*. It'll be up to you to tell me what it is.

VII

AMBITION has never been strong in my veins. To be ambitious you have first to know what you are. Either that, or you do not have to be concerned with what you are. My talent for mimicry was an end in itself. If I could observe someone, I thought in the early days, and then become exactly the same, why should I go through years of work to accomplish it in the reality of society?

I had never any intention of working, but what society demands of you is in fact what life itself wants. So you must imitate it—instead of allowing your soul to be destroyed by believing in it. As soon as you accept something, and cease to play a role regarding it, you are done for. Your soul is in danger. You have even less chance then of ever getting to know the real nature of yourself.

The same must be with everything you are called upon to do in life, whatever action, whether it lasts a minute or a year. Mimic it, I told myself at times of danger when caught by a suspicious joy of life I was about to acquiesce to. The successful mimic is he who not only takes on a role completely so that everyone is deceived, but actually from a distance sees himself with his own eyes doing it so that he himself is never deceived. I only learned to do this later, probably after I broke up with my first wife.

One might imagine that if the main thing in life was the survival of the fittest, then one as a mimic would be wise to imitate and continue to imitate one of the fittest. But not only would that be boring, it would be inhuman, and above all foolish. We know that it is not the fittest who survive, but the wise. The wise die, but the fittest perish, and they perish early on from having settled on one role in life. They have determined to keep it to the very end, and also to defend it to the death against those who would try to show them that the world is richer than they have made it.

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It is the easiest thing in the world for me to recognise those who believe in the survival of the fittest, which means most people. It is conversely difficult for me to meet another person like myself because there are so few of us.

But I once met a woman who was also a mimic. What I could never understand was why those qualities I had made people trust and love me, especially women. If to mimic is to betray (which it certainly is) then you would expect to be generally disliked, but strangely enough it was more often the opposite. She said exactly the same thing, except that it was especially men who loved and trusted her.

A friend of mine from the insurance office where I worked was getting married, and I met her at the reception for it. She was a thin green-eyed girl from the tobacco factory, and I listened to her during the meal mimicking the parson, for she had also been at the church. As a lesser friend of the bride's she was assigned to a more remote table, and I happened to be passing on my way back from the lavatory, where I had mimicked a disgusted man and thrown up what food I'd already eaten.

The people around her didn't know whether to be amused or offended. I was merely interested. Her face lost its pallor and grew weightier with the sombre voice she put on. She had great range of tone, and as she went through the service I took the part of bridegroom. Instead of saying "I will," at the correct moment, I said: "I'm damned if I will," and the two nearest tables joined in the applause.

The actual bride, as this went on, shook at the mouth and dropped tears on to her cheeks. The best man and the bridegroom demanded that we pack it in, but some devil was in us both, and our duet went on as if we were in the middle of a field with no audience at all. There was silence for a few minutes before the uproar. A pair of fine mimics had met, an accident of two stars clashing in interstellar space, and nothing could stop us getting to the end of the act.

The last word was with the best man. I suppose the bridegroom was saving himself for the first night. He only nodded in despair, knowing that it couldn't end in any other way. When the man hit me, I pulled two chairs over and dragged the tablecloth on to the floor. I sprang up and, mimicking an outraged partygoer whose best piece was being unjustly spat on, punched him right over the table, where his head spliced down through the four-tier cake.

The bride screamed as if her husband had been killed. I'd had enough. Grabbing the slender fingers of my fellow mimic I ran out of that doom-laden party for all I was worth, wondering how long the marriage would last after such an inauspicious beginning.

VIII

OUR ASSOCIATION was interesting, but disastrous from the start. We didn't live together, but shared each other's rooms. For a few months it was champagne and roses. Coming back to one of the rooms from our respective jobs we would eat a supper (imitating each other's mastication all the way through), then we would dare each other to mimic certain characters, such as an airline pilot, a policewoman, an insurance man, girl shop assistant. We played with each other, tested each other, acted God and the Devil with the deepest penetrable parts of our hearts and souls. We mimicked each other mimicking people we both knew. We mimicked each other mimicking each other. We mimicked the same person to see who could do it best. When we emptied each other we made love, and it came marvellously on such occasions. We thought we had come to the end of the road, gone over the cliff hand in hand like a couple of Gadarene swine and found we had landed in paradise.

But to think such things only means that the road is about to enter a swamp. I wanted her to marry me, but it turned out she was already married. So was I. Her husband knocked on my door one Sunday afternoon, and what could I do but ask him in? He was a van driver of thirty, but with his sweater

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and quiff he looked seventeen. He appeared stupid and sensitive, a not uncommon combination. "I know you're living with him," he said, "but I've come to ask you to come back and live with me. That's why I've come."

I stood up and made a quiff in my hair, threw off my jacket and pulled the sweater down. Then I repeated his speech in exactly the same voice. It's dangerous mimicking simple people, but I couldn't resist. He must have gone through all the possible situations that could arise before he knocked at my door, but this wasn't one of them. He looked horrorstruck, and leaned against the outside door. At this, Jean, who'd said nothing so far, got up and stretched her spine against the door to the kitchen with exactly the same expression.

"What's going on?" he demanded.

"What's going on?" I mimicked.

He lifted his fist as if about to fly through the room and crash against me. Jean lifted her fist and prepared to spring in exactly the same way. They would have collided and died in an apotheosis of glorious mimicry.

He turned to the door and opened it. Jean pulled at the kitchen door. We heard him running downstairs, and he never came back.

I passed him a few months later as I was walking through town. A girl was with him, and he didn't notice me in my misery. But I saw him all right because I hadn't seen anyone so obviously happy for a long time.

IX

I FOLLOWED Jean from the factory one night, and she met another man.

She'd been seeing me less and less. I'd expected it, but because we couldn't live together, could only exist like two cripples, taking turns to hold each other up, I was struck by jealousy as if a javelin had shuddered deep between my shoulder blades.

When two vampires meet, they meet forever, until another comes to set them free. But freedom is painful, for a while. For a mimic who doesn't believe in it, it can be catastrophic.

I rang the bell of his flat one Sunday morning. As he opened the door Jean made a good imitation of the ringing noise. I saw that I was in for a bad time. Think of what situation you want from the bottom of your soul to avoid, and when you have decided what it is, consider what you'll do when it comes about.

He was grinning by the window, and Jean actually offered me a cup of tea. While she was giving it to me I could see her imitating her actions. She had learned a lot, and I wondered where. I never knew his name. To the world he was an ordinary chap in some trade or other, but to me I saw he was trying to mimic something and I didn't know what it was. I was puzzled, but sat and drank my tea.

I asked Jean how she was, but she only smiled, and didn't seem to know. I wondered if she were happy, and could only say that she was. I knew that if I asked direct questions they would combine to defeat me in mimicry, and I had no wish to bring on to myself what Jean and I had poured on her husband. They knew this. He stayed by the window, grinning, and I withered under the stare that went with it. Nevertheless I looked up at him from time to time. His face seemed a shade paler and thinner. I would fight on my own ground, in other words get up and go—but not before I could see what he was imitating.

But the stare grew ashen and luminous, especially after I had nothing left to say. I stood up and made for the door, but Jean blocked it. Where had she met such a person.

"I'm going," I said calmly. A mimic cannot give up the ground he stands on, without knowing that another piece of land is waiting for him. Here, I was isolated, and the ocean was wide. It wasn't an honour to be defeated at this moment, but it was essential to me as a man. In defeat one can begin to know what one is, in victory—never. "Get out of my way."

Behind my back I heard: "I'm going. Get out of my way"—in my own voice exactly.

"Guess what he's mimicking?" she said.

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Without turning around I saw reflected in her eyes the sky-blue bones of his skull head, and the fixed grin of the victory I'd been forced to give him.

I mimicked her: "Guess what he's mimicking?" and didn't give her time to answer. "A corpse," I said, forcing her gently aside, opening the door, and walking away.

X

BETWEEN BOUTS of mimicking one person and another, my entity becomes blank. To be able to mimic someone I had to like them. That was the first rule, just as in the reverse sense, in order to love someone you have to be able to mimic them. When I mimicked people now, they ceased to like me, if they had ever done so. But then, treachery always begins with a kiss. For these reasons I had found it impossible to imitate God, and not only because I'd never seen him.

Later, in my isolation, I only mimicked people to myself instead of out loud or for the benefit of others. Don't force the pace. This isn't a story. Switch off if you're not with me. I'll go on as long as you can, if not longer. I've had everything: booze, pot, shock, solitary. Yet though I may be sane, and a mimic of the world, can I imitate Mr. Sand or Mr. Water, Mr. Cloud or Mr. Sky with sufficient conviction to become all of them rolled into one realistic and convincing ball?

I mimic myself trying to mimic myself when I don't know who I am or what my real self is. I sit on my own in a pub laughing inwardly because I am more king of the world than anyone else. I see faces around me both troubled and serene, and don't know which one to choose for the great grand mimic of the night. I give up trying to mimic myself, and choose a man talking earnestly to his wife. I stand in the middle of the floor. Everything is clear and steady, but no one looks at me. I talk as if the man's wife were standing two inches from my face, grinning at the jokes I'm (he's) obviously making, then looking slow-eyed and glum when she mentions the children. Somebody pushes by with an empty glass as if I don't exist. I pull him back and he knocks me down. I do exist. I live, and smile on the floor before getting up. But only he notices me, and does so no more as his glass is filled and he steps by me back to his table. It is quite a disturbance, but they don't even call the police.

XI

WAS JEAN'S *new man mimicking* himself, or was it me? I shall never know. But I would not see her again, even though she might want in some way to take up with me. She'd been in contact with evil, and the evil had rubbed off on to her. Some of it in that short time had jumped to me, and I was already trying to fight free of it.

When I was mimicking someone I was walking parallel with the frontiers of madness. When I did it marvellously well, the greater was the drop of madness below me. But I didn't know this. I was driven to mimicry by threat and fear of madness. For some months I totally lost the skill to mimic, and that's why I got a note from my doctor and presented myself at the door of the local head-hospital. They welcomed me with open arms, and I was able to begin making notes from the seven millionth bed.

I did well there, announced to all assembled that I was now going to put on a show of mimicking Doctor So-and-so, and what to me was a brilliant act for them turned out to be perfectly still flesh and a blank stare from a person who was me in the middle of the room.

I had to start again, from the beginning. In order to imitate a sneeze I was thrown on to the floor by the force of it. I turned into a dog down one side of my face, and a moth on the other.

As I came up from the pit I started to write these notes. I have written them out five times already, and on each occasion they have been snatched from me by the attendant and burned. While I write I am quiet; when I stop, I rave. That is why they are taken from me.

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XII

I DIDN'T STAY long: it took me two years to recover. To imitate was like learning to speak again. But my soul was filled with iron, and I went on and on. The whole world was inside of me, and on any stage I chose I performed my masterpiece of mimicry. These were merely rehearsals for when I actually figured as the same person over and over again, a calm, precise, reasonable man who bore no relation to the real me seething like a malt-vat inside. The select audience appreciated my effort. I don't think anything was lost on them, except perhaps the truth.

No one can mimic time and make it go away, as one can sometimes make friends and enemies alike disappear when you mimic them. I had to sit with time, feed it my bones in daylight and darkness.

This great creation of mine, that I dredged up so painfully from the bottom of my soul, was someone I'd side-stepped from birth. I breathed life in him, a task as hard as if he were a stone, yet I had to perfect him and make him live, because in the looney bin I realised the trap I'd walked into.

I made a successful imitation of a sane man, and then they let me out. It felt like the greatest day of my life. I do not think my performance could have been better than it was.

An insane man can vanish like a fish in water, and hide anywhere. I am not insane, and it was never my intention to become so. But one is forced to mimic to perfection a sane man so as to become free, and what greater insanity is there than that? Yet it widens the horizons of the heart, which is no bad thing for someone who was born a mimic.

Years have passed, and in my pursuit and mimicry of sanity I have become the assistant-manager of a large office. I am thirty-five years of age, and never married again. I went to Switzerland when I took some autumn leave. Don't ask me why—that means you, the one I'm imitating, and you, who I am not. I planned the space off work and went to London with my pocket full of travellers' cheques and a passport. I had a rucksack, and in it was a hammock, nylon groundsheet, blanket, pair of shoes, food-plate, knife, fork, waterbottle, medicines, tobacco, matches, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, compass, a book, notebook and pencils. That's all. I don't remember where I got such a list from but I did, and stuck to it religiously. I was determined that every action from now on should have some meaning, just as in the past every time I had ever mimicked anyone had also had some important significance. One cannot live in the world of chance. If fate will not act for you, then take it by the neck.

XIII

IT WAS SO COLD I thought my head would break like an old teapot, but as I walked away from the lake and along the narrow road between banks of trees I got used to it. The walls of the mountains on either side were so steep it seemed that if anybody were foolhardy enough to climb up they would fall off and down—unless they were a fly. Perhaps I could mimic a fly, since already in the cold I had conjured a burning stove into my belly. A car passed and offered me a lift. I waved it on.

It was getting dark by five, and there wasn't much snow to be seen, a large sheet of luminous basilisk blue overhead, and behind me to the south a map-patch of dying fluorescent pink. The air was pure, you could certainly say that for it. The sun must have given the valley an hour each day, then a last wink before it vanished on its way to America.

There was snow underfoot, at certain higher places off the road, good clean snow that you could eat with honey on it. I could not see such snow and fading sun without death coming into my heart, the off-white powder humps in the dusk thrown between rock and tree-boles, flecked among the grey and scattered rooftops of a village I was coming to.

Bells were sounding from the church, a

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leisurely mellow music coming across the snow, so welcoming that they made me think that maybe I had had a childhood after all. I walked up the steep narrow lanes, slipping on the snow hardened into beds of ice. No one was about, though lights were in the windows of dark wooden houses.

Along one lane was a larger building of plain brick, and I went inside for something to eat. A girl stood by the counter, and said good evening in Italian. I took off my pack and overcoat and she pointed to tables set in the room behind.

They did not ask me what I wanted but brought soup, then roast meat, bread and cabbage. I gave in my passport, intending to stay the night. A woman walked in, tall, blonde, rawboned and blue-eyed. She sat at another table, and fed half her meal to the cat. After my long trek from the railway station (stopping only in the town to buy a map) I was starving, and had eyes for nothing but my food. The first part of the walk was agony. I creaked like an old man, but now, in spite of my exhaustion, I felt I could walk on through the night.

I did not sleep well. In dreams I began to feel myself leaving the world. My hand was small and made of copper, tiny (like hammers that broke toffee when I was a child), and I placed it on my head that was immense and made of concrete, solid, but that suddenly started to get smaller. This was beginning to be an actual physical state, so I opened my eyes to fight it off. If I didn't I saw myself being pressed and squeezed into extinction, out of the world. It didn't seem as if I would go mad (nothing is that simple) but that I would be killed by this attrition of total insecurity. It seemed as if the earth were about to turn into concrete and roll over my body.

I got out of bed and dressed. The air in the room, which had firmly shut double windows and radiators, was stifling. When you think you're going mad it's a sign you're getting over it. The faces of everyone I'd ever mimicked or made love to fell to pieces in turn like a breaking jig-saw puzzle.

My boots bit into the snow as I closed the door behind. It wasn't yet midnight. There was a distinct ring around the full and brilliant moon. There was snow on the mountain sides, and it seemed as if just over the line of their crests a neon light was shining. I walked along the lanes of the village, in the scorching frosty cold.

XIV

To question why one is alive means that one is only half a person, but to be a whole person is to be half dead.

Sun was shining over the snow next morning as I sat by the window drinking coffee. I was near the head of the valley, and the mountain slopes opened out. Most of it was sombre forest with occasional outcrops of rock, but to the west, at a place shone on directly by the sun, I could see green space. It was a meadow, and higher up was a belt of trees. Then nothing but rock and snow, and blue sky. My eyes were always good. I never needed glasses or binoculars, and just above the meadow before the trees began was a small hut. No smoke came from it.

I paid my bill, collected my pack and said goodbye. At the road a cow had been hit by a car and lay dying. The car's headlamp was shattered and the animal lay in a pool of blood, moving its hoofs slightly. A group of people stood around, and the driver was showing his papers. Another man rested a notebook on the car-top to write. It was all very orderly. I pushed through and looked into the eyes of the dying animal. It did not understand. As a last gesture it bellowed, but no one was interested in it, because the end was certain. No one even heard it, I was sure. The damson eyes were full of the non-comprehension of understanding. The mountains were reflected in one, and the village in the other—or so it seemed as I paced back and forth. Another bellow sounded, even after it was dead, and when all the people looked at me at last to make sure that the noise was coming from me and not out of the sky I walked on alone up the road, away from the spoiled territory of the heart, and the soiled landscape of the soul.

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XV

I AM WILD. If I lift up my eyes to the hills a child cries. A child crying makes me sad. A baby crying puts me into a rage against it. I imagine everything. If I go into the hills and sit there, birds sing. They are made of frost, like the flowers. Insanity means freedom, nothing else. Tell me how to live and I'll be dangerous. If I find out for myself I'll die of boredom afterwards. When I look along the valley and then up it seems as if the sky is coming in to land. The mountains look as tall as if they are about to walk over me. If they want to, let them. I shall not be afraid.

The wind is fresh except when it blows smoke into my face. I built a fire by the hut, boil water on it for tea. The wind is increasing, and I don't like the look of the weather.

The hut is sheltered, and when I came to it I found as if by instinct a key just under the roof. There's nothing inside, but the floor is clean, and I have my hammock, as well as food. When it is dark it seems as if the wind has been moaning and prowling for days, plying its claws into every interstice of the nerves. I wanted to get out and go after it, climb the escarpment above the tree-line with a knife between my teeth, and fight on the high plateau in the light of the moon, corner that diabolic wind and stab it to death, tip his carcass over the nearest cliff.

I cannot mimic either Jack Frost or a windkiller. It's too dark, pit-shadows surround me, but there's no fear because outside in the mountains the whole fresh world stretches, waiting for children like me to get up in the morning, to go out into it and be born again.

I have finished with mimicking. I always thought the time would come, but could never imagine when or where. I cannot get into anyone any more and mimic them. I am too far into myself at last—for better or worse, good or bad, till death do us part.

In loneliness and darkness I am one man, and one man will go down into the daylight. A crowd of phantoms followed me up, and I collected them together in this black-aired hut, tamed them and tied them down, dogs, moths, mothers and wives. Having arrived at the cliff face of the present, there's little else to say. When my store of food is finished I'll descend the mountainside and go to the inn, where I'll think some more as I sit drinking coffee by the window, and watch the snow or sunshine, before setting off on my travels.

Don't ask me where, or who with.

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P. B. Medawar

Science & Literature

I HOPE I shall not be thought ungracious if I say at the outset that nothing on earth would have induced me to attend the kind of lecture you may think I am about to give. Science and literature: what a hackneyed subject, you must feel: must we go into that again? What can there be to say that has not already been said, sometimes very well said, by I. A. Richards, Aldous Huxley, C. P. Snow, Martin Green, J. Bronowski, D. G. King-Hele, and half-a-dozen others?

Let me begin with an outline of some of the things I do *not* intend to say. I shall say nothing whatsoever about education, and have no formula for compounding science and literature into a single diet: nor shall I say, or even be thinking, that imaginative literature can be regarded as an antidote or counter-irritant to science or *vice versa*. There will be no readings from poetry written by scientists—not even a quotation or biopsy specimen from the poetry of George John Romanes, *F.R.S.* I shall not declare that henceforward the discoveries, ideas, and adventures of science should become a bigger part of the subject matter of poetry, as Wordsworth thought they might; nor shall I reproach poets and "magazine critics," as Peacock did, with carrying on just as if "there were no such things in existence as mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, moralists, metaphysicians, historians, politicians, and political economists. . . ."

After these various abjurations, what is there left to say? If I had to choose a motto for this lecture, I should turn a remark of Lowes Dickinson's upside down. "When science arrives," said Lowes Dickinson, "it expels literature"—an echo, perhaps, of Keats' lament that science unweaves the rainbow and makes a dull ordinariness out of awful things. The case I shall find evidence for is that when literature arrives, it expels science. There are large territories of human belief and learning upon which both science and literature have very important things to say, for example social and cultural anthropology, psychology and human behaviour generally, and even cosmology. These subjects lie within the compass of literature in so far as they have to do with human hopes, fears, beliefs and motives; with the attempt to give an account of ourselves and investigate our condition; and with matters of general culture, by which I mean the whole pattern of the way in which people think and carry on. The case that can be made for science is that in all these subjects we must *also* work to achieve that special kind of understanding which, though imaginative in origin (as I shall hope to convince you), is under the censorship imposed by the literal or empirical truth.

THE WAY THINGS ARE at present, it is simply no good pretending that science and literature represent complementary and mutually sustaining endeavours to reach a common goal. On the contrary: where they might be expected to co-operate, they compete. I regret this very much, don't think it necessary, and wish it were otherwise: we are going through a bad episode in cultural history. We all want to be friends, and one day perhaps we shall be so. "Let us advance together, men of letters and men of science," said Aldous Huxley, "further

THIS *is the text of Sir Peter Medawar's recent Romanes lecture at the Sheldonian, Oxford. Dr. Medawar was awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1960. He is Director of the National Institute for Medical Research, and among his books are* The Future of Man (*1960*) *and* The Art of the Soluble (*1967*), *both published by Methuen, and* Induction and Intuition in Scientific Thought, *to be published shortly by the American Philosophical Society.*

Sir Peter's previous contributions to ENCOUNTER *include: "Onwards from Spencer: Evolution and Evolutionism" (September 1963), "Anglo-Saxon Attitudes" (August 1965), and "Science & the Sanctity of Life" (December 1966).*

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and further into the ever expanding regions of the unknown." That is a fine ambition, though most of us will feel awkward at its wording; but if it is to be achieved, scientists and men of letters must work their way towards an understanding—not just of each other's accomplishments (there is mischief and magnificence in both), nor just of each other's purposes (which are doubtless mixed, though officially both are good); but of each other's methods and energising concepts, and the quality and pattern of movements of each other's thought. I want therefore to discuss imagination and criticism as they enter into science, on the one hand, and into literature, on the other; to explain why I think that scientific and literary conceptions of style and matters of communication cannot be reconciled; and finally to compare scientific and poetic notions of the truth. Towards the end, if there is time, I shall use Freudian psychoanalysis and existential psychiatry to illustrate the way in which science and literature compete for the territories on which they both have claims.

LET ME BEGIN by discussing the character and interaction of imagination and critical reasoning in literature and in science. I shall use "imagination" in a modern sense (modern on the literary time scale, I mean), or at all events in a sense fully differentiated from mere fancy or whimsical inventiveness. (It is worth remembering that when the phrase "creative imagination" is used today, we are expected to look solemn and attentive, but in the 18th century we could as readily have looked contemptuous or even shocked.)

The official Romantic view is that Reason and the Imagination are antithetical; or, at best, that they provide alternative pathways leading to the truth, the pathway of Reason being long and winding and stopping short of the summit, so that while Reason is breathing heavily, there is Imagination capering lightly up the hill. It is true that Shelley recognised a poetical element in science, though "the poetry is concealed by the accumulation of facts and calculating processes"; true also that in one passage of his famous rhapsody, he was kind enough to say that poetry comprehends all science—though here, as he makes plain, he is using poetry in a general sense to stand for all exercises of the creative spirit, a sense that comprehends imaginative literature itself as one of its special instances; but in the ordinary usages to which I shall restrict myself, reason and imagination are antithetical. That was Shelley's view and Keats', Wordsworth's and Coleridge's; it was also Peacock's, for whom Reason was marching into territories formerly occupied by poets; and it was also the view of William Blake, who came "in the grandeur of Inspiration to cast off Rational Demonstration . . . to cast off Bacon, Locke & Newton"—"I will not Reason & Compare: my business is to create."

This was not only the official view of the Romantic poets: it was also the official scientific view. When Newton wrote *hypotheses non fingo*, he was *taken to mean* that he reprobated the exercise of the imagination in science. (He did not "really" mean this, of course, but the importance of his disclaimer lies precisely in this misunderstanding of it.) Bacon too, and later on John Stuart Mill, were taken as official spokesmen for the belief that there existed, or could be devised, a calculus of discovery, a formulary of intellectual behaviour, which could be relied upon to conduct the scientist towards the truth; and this new calculus was thought of almost as an antidote to the imagination, as it had been in Bacon's own day an antidote to what Macaulay called the "sterile exhuberance" of scholastic thought. Even today this central canon of inductivism, that scientific thought is fully accountable to reason, is assumed quite unthinkingly to be true. "Science is a matter of disinterested observation, unprejudiced insight and experimentation, and patient ratiocination within some system of logically correlated concepts"—an important opinion, for Aldous Huxley is a man thought to speak with equal authority for science and letters.

Huxley would, of course, have been the last man to deny imagination a role in science; nor even did the high priest of Inductivism, Karl Pearson; but in science a creative imagination is the privilege of the rare spirit, who achieves in a blaze of intuition what the rest of us can only do by rote or by "analytic industry" (Wordsworth's term). But the point is (I am still recounting the official view) that we *can* do it; we may not all be great cooks, but we can all read the instructions on the packet; there is a calculus of discovery and it works independently of intuition, though nothing like so fast.

This official view—of the *complete* accountability of science to reason—is no longer believed in by most people who have thought deeply

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about the nature of the scientific process. An entirely different conception grew up in the writings of William Whewell, Stanley Jevons, C. S. Peirce and latterly of Karl Popper. Because its message is in danger of being lost in technical arguments over points of detail, let me explain the gist of it in very general terms.

ALL ADVANCE OF scientific understanding, at every level, begins with a speculative adventure, an imaginative preconception *of what might be true*—a preconception which always, and necessarily, goes a little way (sometimes a long way) beyond anything which we have logical or factual authority to believe in. It is the invention of a Possible World, or of a tiny fraction of that world. The conjecture is then exposed to criticism to find out whether or not that imagined world is anything like the real one. Scientific reasoning is therefore at all levels an interaction between two episodes of thought, a dialogue between two voices, the one imaginative and the other critical; a dialogue, if you like, between the possible and the actual, between proposal and disposal, conjecture and criticism; between what might be true and what is in fact the case.

In this conception of the scientific process, imagination and criticism are integrally combined. Imagination without criticism may burst out into a comic profusion of grandiose and silly notions. Critical reasoning, considered alone, is barren. The Romantics believed that poetry, *poiesis*, the creative exploit, was the very opposite of analytic reasoning, something lying far above the common transactions of reason with reality; and so they missed one of the very greatest of all discoveries, of the synergism between imagination and reasoning, between the inventive and the critical faculties. I call it a "discovery," but no one person made it. Coleridge could have made it; he alone in 150 years was qualified in every way to do so. It is a tragedy of cultural history that he did not.

At this point a spokesman for literature might say: "I accept the idea that scientific reasoning can be resolved into a dialogue between critical and inventive faculties, or something of that general nature, but what is so distinctively scientific about it, and why should it be held to distinguish science from imaginative literature?" He would quote Matthew Arnold, perhaps: all poetry is criticism of life: but in this context he would probably not wish to press the point, for Arnold, too, saw criticism and inventiveness as antithetical, and when he says, for example, that "the critical power is of lower rank than the creative," he shows that he has no idea of the existence of forms of intellection to which class distinctions of this kind do not apply. But would it not be reasonable to say that literary criticism has a function cognate with that which I have attributed to criticism in science?

I AM NOT deeply enough read in modern critical literature to say whether there is anything in such an argument or not, but my inclination would be to say that there is not. I have been saying that the critical episode of thought is something integral with scientific reasoning; that which has not yet been exposed to it is not yet science. Literary criticism, on the other hand, is a branch of literature which has literature as its subject matter, and that is an altogether different thing. A better case could be made for saying that literary criticism has something in common with scientific methodology. There is something in this, surely, but the similarities between them are rather dull and the differences interesting. Scientific methodology has to do with matters of validation and justification as they enter into all forms of scientific thinking; with the trustworthiness of evidence, and with the analysis of certain formal ideas that are common to all the sciences, for example, the ideas of causality or of reducibility and emergence. But it has nothing to do with the motives and purposes of scientists nor with the degree to which their work achieves them: science is shown to us in terms of accomplishment, not in terms of endeavour; it does not attempt to justify science in any sense except the scientific; above all it does not try to see scientific thought and action as elements of general culture. What *should* be the equivalent in science of literary criticism is therefore represented by a great emptiness which is a reproach to all scholars, scientists and humanists alike. I cannot even think of a name for the new discipline that might fill those empty spaces, for "scientific humanism" is too deeply committed to a different meaning, and its practitioner, the "scientific humanist," has too long and too often been made a figure of fun (you have only to think of some of Peacock's caricatures, or of Sir Austin Feverel). Perhaps the word I want is just "criticism" itself, without qualification.

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The gist of what I have been saying is this. Our traditional views about imagination and criticism in literature and in science are based upon the literary propaganda of the Romantic poets and the erroneous opinions of inductivist philosophers. Imagination is the energising force of science as well as of poetry, but in science imagination and a critical evaluation of its products are integrally combined. To adopt a conciliatory attitude, let us say that science is that form of poetry (going back now to its classical and more general sense) in which Reason and Imagination act together synergistically. This simple formal property (which can, of course, be expounded in a much more professional and specific language than anything I have attempted here) represents the most important methodological discovery of modern thought.

I NOW TURN to the discussion of matters of style.

The poet "yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description, which doth neither strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul." At a time when the writing of English had reached a peak of adventurousness and effulgence—and partly, but not wholly, because it had done so—the New Philosophers of the 17th Century (new scientists, we should now say) were put officially on their guard against the danger of being carried away by the sound of their own voices. I say "officially" because the warning came from the Royal Society. Then and for evermore they were to abjure the "painted scenes and pageants of the brain." Their writing was to be "manly and yet plain. . . . It is not broken by ends of Latin, nor impertinent quotations . . . not rendered intricate by long parentheses, nor gaudy by flaunting metaphors; not tedious by wide fetches and circumferences of speech"; the scientific style was to be "as polite and as fast as marble." I am quoting Joseph Glanvill, *F.R.S.*; not a good one to talk, perhaps, because his own style was described by a fellow scientist as somewhat florid; but he spoke for common opinion. Not Words but Works were to carry the message of the New Philosophy. "We believe a scientist because he can substantiate his remarks," said I. A. Richards, "not because he is eloquent and forcible in his enunciation. In fact, we distrust him when he seems to be influencing us by his manner"; and there is a passage in a still undiscovered manuscript of Bacon's in which he expresses his abhorrence of the *venditio suavis* or "soft sell."

Lowes Dickinson was right, if we take him in a narrower sense than he may have intended. Science and imaginative *writing* are utterly incongruous; in English anyway—the French tradition is more permissive—the effect of combining them is merely absurd. In science the imaginative element lies in the conception, and not at all in the language by which the conception is made explicit or conveyed. (The "language" might indeed use the symbolism of electronic circuitry, or of chemistry or mathematics.) Clarity can be, *must* be achieved, and with a natural stylist like D'Arcy Thompson, grace; but a scientist's fingers, unlike an historian's, must never stray towards the diapason, and a falling cadence is allowed only to mark, and perhaps be the welcome evidence of, the end of a "presentation."

By the time of the New Philosophy, the competition or disputation between eloquence and wisdom, style and substance, medium and message had already been in progress for nearly two thousand years, but so far as the New Philosophy was concerned the Royal Society, with the formidable support of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes, may be thought to have settled the matter once for all: scientific and philosophic writing were on no account to be made the subject of a literary spectacle and of exercises in the high rhetoric style.

THIS POSITION HAS BEEN threatened only during those two periods in which our native philosophic style (which is also a style of thinking) was obfuscated by influences from abroad. During the Gothic period of philosophic writing, which began before the middle of the 19th century and continued until the first World War, we were all oppressed and perhaps mildly stupefied by metaphysical profundities of German origin; but although those tuba-notes from the depths of the Rhine filled us with thoughts of great solemnity and confusion, it was not as music, thank heavens, that we were expected to admire them. The style was not an object of admiration in itself. Today, though we are now much better armed against it, speculative metaphysics has given way to what might be called a *salon* philosophy as the chief exotic influence, and French writers enjoy the reverential attention that was at one time thought due to

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German. Style has now become an object of first importance, and what a style it is! For me it has a prancing, high-stepping quality, full of self-importance; elevated indeed, but in the balletic manner, and stopping from time to time in studied attitudes, as if awaiting an outburst of applause. It has had a deplorable influence on the quality of modern thought in philosophy and in the behavioural and "human" sciences.

The style I am speaking of, like the one it superseded, is often marked by its lack of clarity, and hereabouts we are apt to complain that it is sometimes very hard to follow. To say as much, however, may now be taken as a sign of eroded sensibilities. I could quote evidence of the beginnings of a whispering campaign against the virtues of clarity. A writer on structuralism in the *Times Literary Supplement* has recently suggested that thoughts which are confused and tortuous by reason of their profundity are most appropriately expressed in prose that is deliberately unclear. What a preposterously silly idea! I am reminded of an air raid warden in wartime Oxford who, when bright moonlight seemed to be defeating the spirit of the blackout, exhorted us to wear dark glasses. He, however, was being funny on purpose.

I must not speak of obscurity as if it existed in just one species. A man may indeed write obscurely when he is struggling to resolve problems of great intrinsic difficulty. This was the obscurity of Kant, one of the greatest of all thinkers. There is no more moving or touching passage in his writings than that in which he confesses that he has no gift for lucid exposition, and expresses the hope that in due course others will help to make his intentions plain.

In the 18th century obscurity was regarded as a disfigurement not merely of philosophic and scientific but also of theological prose. To conceal meaning (it was argued) is equally to conceal lack of meaning, so we don't know where we stand. George Campbell (the Scottish philosopher and divine, not the poet) thought himself specially afflicted by mystical theology, and his interpretation of it will pass very well today. Mystical theology is a prose offering to the Almighty; and just as it is in the nature of a living sacrifice that it should be deprived of life before being offered up to Godhead, so a prose offering must be deprived of sense. This then is constitutive obscurity: that which appears to be nonsense for the simplest of all reasons, namely that it is in fact not sense.

But even in those Enlightened days, the appeal of obscurity was clearly recognised. Of Dryden—even of Dryden—Johnson said that "he delighted to tread upon the brink of meaning, where light and darkness begin to mingle." Don't we all, up to a point? We all recognise a voluptuary element in the higher forms of incomprehension, and a sense of deprivation when matters which have hitherto been mysterious are now made clear.

The *rhetorical* use of obscurity is, however, a vice. It is often said—and it was said of Kant—that the purpose of obscure or difficult writing is to create the illusion of profundity, and the accusation need not be thought an unjust one merely because it is trite. But in its more subtle usages, obscurity can be used to create the illusion of a deeply reasoned discourse. Suppose we read a text with a closely reasoned argument which is complex and hard to follow. We struggle with it, and as we go along we may say "I don't see how he makes that out" or "I can see now what he's getting at," but in the end we shall probably get there, and either agree with what the author says or find reasons for taking a different view. But suppose there is no argument; suppose that the text is asseverative in manner, perhaps because analytical reasoning has been repudiated in favour of reasoning of some higher kind. If now the text is made hard to follow because of non-sequiturs, digressions, paradoxes, impressive-sounding references to Gödel, Wittgenstein and topology, in-jokes, trollopy metaphors and a general determination to keep all vulgar sensibilities at bay; then again we shall have great difficulty in finding out what the author intends us to understand. We shall have to reason it out therefore, much as we reasoned out Latin unseens, or a notice in some language we don't fully understand. In both texts some pretty strenuous reasoning may be interposed between the author's conceptions and our understanding of them, and it is strangely easy to forget that in one case the reasoning was the author's, but in the other case our own. We have thus been the victims of a confidence trick.

Let me end this section with a declaration of my own. In all territories of thought which science or philosophy can lay claim to, including those upon which literature has also a proper claim, no one who has something original or important to say will willingly run the risk of its being misunderstood; people who write

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obscurely are either unskilled in writing or up to mischief. The writers I am speaking of are, however, in a purely literary sense, extremely skilled.

LET ME NOW TURN to a comparison between scientific and poetic notions of the truth, though only so far as it may help us to recognise and define the literary syndrome in scientific or quasi-scientific thought.

When the word is used in a scientific context, "truth" means, of course, correspondence with reality. Something is true which is "actually" true, is indeed the case. This is empirical truth —truth in the sense in which it is true to say that I am at this moment delivering the Romanes Lecture and not standing on my head on an ice floe in the North Atlantic; and you know that correspondence with reality in just this sense is the test that all scientific theories must be put to, no matter how lofty or how trivial they may be.

We must at once dismiss the idea that empirical or factual truth as scientists use it (or lawyers or historians) is an elementary or primitive notion of which everyone must have an intuitive or inborn understanding. On the contrary, it is very advanced, very grown up; something we learn to appreciate, not something that comes to us naturally. We must also, I think, dismiss the inductive interpretation of the way in which truth enters into scientific enquiry. In classical inductive theories of scientific method, plain factual truth is what scientific reasoning is supposed to begin with: we start (or else it is no use starting) with an exact apprehension of the facts of the case; with a reliable transcript of the evidence of the senses which inductive reasoning can thereupon compound into more general truths or natural laws. We are led into error (according to inductive theory) only when the facts we thought we could rely upon were wrongly apprehended. Error is due to an indistinctness of vision, a false reading of that Book of Nature in which the truth resides and can be got at if only we can retain or reacquire the innocent, candid, child-like faculty of grasping what is in fact the case.

I share Karl Popper's view that this conception of truth and error is utterly unrealistic. Scientific theories, as I said earlier, begin as imaginative constructions; they begin, if you like, as stories; and the purpose of the critical or rectifying episode in scientific reasoning is precisely to find out whether or not these stories are stories about real life. Literal or empiric truthfulness is not therefore the starting point of scientific enquiry, but rather the direction in which scientific reasoning moves. If this is a fair statement, it follows that scientific and poetic or imaginative accounts of the world are not distinguishable in their origins. They start in parallel, but diverge from one another at some later stage. We all tell stories, but the stories differ in the purposes we expect them to fulfil and in the kinds of evaluation to which they are exposed.

The divergence of poetic from factual truthfulness was not always taken for granted. For Sir Philip Sidney and his contemporaries it was something that had to be justified and reasoned out. "Now for the poet" says Sir Philip Sidney in a famous passage of his *Apology*, "he nothing affirms and therefore never lieth. For, as I take it, to lie is to affirm that to be true which is false . . . but the poet (as I said before) never affirmeth." If, all other things being equal, the choice is between correspondence with and departure from reality, then the choice is for reality: a painting which professes to be portrait must be a likeness; but if the choice is between what things are and what they ought to be, "considered in relation to use and learning," then the literal truth, what actually happened, is usually less *doctrinable* than things as they might have been. For the scientist (Sidney says "historian," but in this context scientist will do) is in bondage to the particular, to that which was—the historian's "bare *was*" is Sidney's phrase—and any precept or general statement compounded of these bare particulars can only have the force of a "conjectured likelihood." It will not have the force of a poetic truth.

The idea that a poetic truth is a revelation of the ideal, of what *ought to be*, is taken by Sidney from Aristotle. Sidney (and incidentally Bacon) construe *ought to be* in the moralistic or doctrinable sense. For Bacon, narrative poetry "feigns acts more heroical" than anything which actually happened, and thus "conduces not only to delight but also to magnanimity and morality"; dramatic poetry may be "a means of educating men's minds to virtue," and the purpose of what Bacon describes as the highest form of poetry, the parabolical, must obviously be to improve.

This is what Sidney understood by the conception of what *ought to be*, but according

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to Professor Butcher's well-known analysis of the matter, it was not Aristotle's. The reason why Aristotle believed poetry to be "a more philosophical and a higher thing than history" (and here too we may read "science") is because it reveals what ought to be in the light of a true understanding of Nature's intentions. Not of Nature's actions, for these are clumsy and imperfect: no, the poet discerns the purpose which Nature is working, often most inadequately, to fulfil. The poet is thus one up on Nature (this was not Professor Butcher's expression), and is the spokesman of her unfulfilled designs.

Aristotle's conception enriches or replaces scientific truth by truth of a higher kind, that which represents the testimony of a deeper and more privileged insight—a truth so lofty that, if Nature does not conform to it, why then, so much the worse for Nature.

A SECOND INTERPRETATION of poetic truth—the one I have just outlined is no longer professionally defended, which is not to say that it is no longer believed in—would claim for it that it represents truth, not of a higher kind, but simply of a different kind; an alternative conception, or one of a set of alternatives, which enriches our understanding of the actual by making us move and think and orientate ourselves in "a domain wider than the actual." I believe this view is essentially a fair one, and it would be silly to squabble over matters of copyright to do with the usage of the word "truth." Nevertheless, great difficulties arise when it is allowed to infiltrate into science.

In this second conception of truth, a structure of imaginative thought—for example a myth, especially if it appeals to magical agencies—will be judged true if it is all of a piece, hangs together, doesn't contradict itself, leaves no loose ends, and can cope with the unexpected. No single word in common speech describes this set of properties, but a narrative or theory or world picture or imaginative structure of any kind which answers to them is said to "make sense," to have the property of being *believable-in*. All scientific theories must make sense, of course, but in addition they are expected to conform to reality, to be empirically true. It is the relaxation of this condition, or the failure to enforce it, that opens up to us a world that is larger, more various and perhaps more doctrinable than real life.

I spoke of myths. In his famous work on savage thought, M. Lévi-Strauss dismisses the cosy traditional belief that myths are primitive absurdities, are silly innocent constructions that represent a merely rudimentary stage in the development of scientific thought. On the contrary, one can think of "the rigorous precision of magical thought and ritual practices as an expression of the unconscious apprehension of the *truth of determinism*, the mode in which scientific phenomena exist." Instead of contrasting magic and science, "it is better to compare them as two parallel methods of acquiring knowledge," or as "two scientific levels at which nature is accessible to scientific enquiry," both being "equally valid."

What Lévi-Strauss is telling us is that myths make sense, as conventional scientific theories make sense, and he does not feel that their failure to measure up to reality—to pass that extra examination which has to do with conformity to real life—disqualifies them from being described as "scientific." Some Siberian peoples, he tells us, "believe that the touch of a woodpecker's beak will cure toothache," and for this and similar reasons

> it may be objected that science of this kind can scarcely be of much practical effect. The answer to this is that its main purpose is not a practical one. It meets intellectual requirements rather than or instead of satisfying needs.... The real question is not whether the touch of a woodpecker's beak does in fact cure toothache. It is rather whether there is a point of view from which a woodpecker's beak and a man's tooth can be seen as "going together" (the use of this congruity for therapeutic purposes being only one of its possible uses), and whether some initial order can be introduced into the universe through these groupings.

This is a clear statement of his case, and I find it utterly unconvincing. Whose "intellectual requirements" are being met, we may wonder, the savage's or the anthropologist's? By what extra criterion shall we be satisfied that the anthropologist himself is not creating a meta-mythology, a mythology about myths? And would not someone actually suffering from toothache incline towards a more pragmatic style of thought? The point is that making sense and being believable-in are necessary but not sufficient qualifications for a process of intellection to be called commonsensical or scientific. The world of myths is Blake's world, Beulah, "a place where contrarieties are equally true," a world where the opposite of truth is not falsehood but—another truth: not necessarily

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a rival truth, but the telling of a different story, the testimony of a different interpretation of the world. Another myth, another set of magical allegiances, may serve the same or an equivalent purpose. The evidence Lévi-Strauss brings forward to contest the commonplace view that myths are a kind of fumbling approximation to science—a first groping attempt to make sense out of the complexities of the world—is just that which seems to me to justify it. For myths are not really truths; at best they are truth-like structures, a part of the candidature for what might pass as true, but a candidature excused from public examination.

THE INSUFFICIENCY of merely making sense and conferring order is not always fully grasped by laymen. Freudian psycho-analytic theory is a mythology that answers pretty well to Lévi-Strauss' description. It brings some kind of order into incoherence; it too hangs together, makes sense, leaves no loose ends, and is never (but never) at a loss for explanation. In a state of bewilderment it may therefore bring comfort and relief. But what about its therapeutic pretensions? The embarrassment of the woodpecker's beak is now got out of most adroitly. For in the opinion of many advanced thinkers it is rather—well, rather *common* to suppose that the purpose of Freudian psychotherapy is, in the conventional sense, to cure. Its purpose is rather to give its subject a new and deeper understanding of his own condition and of the nature of his relationship to his fellow men. A mythical structure will be built up around him which makes sense and is believable in, regardless of whether or not it is true. Another such structure might do as much for him—or as little.

In existential psychiatry, the idea of "cure" is dismissed contemptuously, and replaced by the idea of "healing": a madman, for example, is healed when a microcosm of thought and personal relationships is built up around him in which his behaviour is no longer "mad," *i.e.* incongruous, anti-social, alienated from the majority opinion. The concept of "explanation" is replaced by that of *understanding*, the process of discernment that uncovers a scheme of thinking within which a madman's actions and opinions now make sense.

With Freudian or existential psychology, as with myths, the question hardly arises of rational agreement or disagreement: these are ugly, hectoring words. Rather it is a question of acquiescence, of being taken into the author's scheme of thinking—and to describe acquiescence as a process of being "taken in" has exactly the right connotation of surrender on the one hand, and on the other hand of magic or contrived illusion. For these well-intentioned people are *telling stories*, sometimes wonderfully well told, so perhaps we should exercise a grown-up indulgence. When children don't tell the truth, their mother doesn't summon them to her knees and call them flaming little liars. On the contrary, she says "You mustn't tell stories"; but although she wears a special kind of solemn face when she says so, she doesn't really think that telling stories is wicked unless it actually leads to harm.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE PSYCHOLOGIES I have been talking about are highly mischievous, not so much because they do harm or fail to do good, but because they represent a style of thought that will impede the growth of our understanding of mental illness. Consider, for a moment, imbecility, a subject in which scientifically founded psychiatry has made some ground. Here is an imbecile child who when it was born seemed normal, that is, ordinary: what can now be wrong?

Did some immemorial foreknowledge of the intrinsic contradictions of living drive it back into the habitation of a voiceless inner world? Did its parents, by some involuntary withholding of compassion, fail to ratify the child's ontological awareness of its essential self?

Or it is perhaps unable to metabolise phenylalanine? Has it got the right number of chromosomes? What about the concentration of triiodothyronine in its blood?

Two quite different sets of questions, and the people who ask them belong to two quite different kinds of worlds, figuratively speaking the salon and the laboratory. Cultural psychiatry (but here I exclude Freud himself) repudiates the idea of an organic cause of mental abnormality; repudiates, indeed, some of the very concepts in terms of which the notion is expressed. The scientist *wants* it to be true. If there existed in science and medicine an analogue of literary criticism, we should investigate not only what people have reason to believe in, but the kind of thing they *want* to believe in, and the cultural history of how they have come to acquire two or more different habits of expectation which cannot be reconciled.

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IT FOLLOWS FROM WHAT I have said that Freudian and other quasi-scientific psychologies are getting away with a concept of truthfulness which belongs essentially to imaginative literature, that in which the opposite of a truth is not falsehood but (we are back in Beulah) another truth. I strongly suspect that the same may be true of the more literary forms of other behavioural sciences, but I have not studied them deeply enough to say so for sure.

MY CONTENTION in this lecture has been that science tends to expel literature, and literature science, from any territory to which they both lay claim—particularly the areas of learning that relate to human behaviour in its widest sense.

The distinguishing marks of the literary syndrome in science are, if you have followed my argument, these. *First*, there is an open or implied claim to a deeper insight than can be achieved by laboratory scientists or historians or philologists, or by philosophers of the traditional English kind; an insight which soars beyond the busy little world of test tubes and graphs and measuring instruments, or indeed of facts. *Second*, there is a combination of high imaginativeness with a relaxation of or a failure to enforce the critical process, so that the critical and inventive faculties no longer work together synergistically, but tend if anything to compete; and with this goes a whispering campaign against the importance attached to validation or justification, and even, in extreme cases, now beyond remedy, against rational thought. *Third* (and this is what gives the syndrome a literary rather than a metaphysical character) is the *style* in which the high truths of the imagination are made known, a style which, among many other disfigurements, systematically exploits the voluptuary and rhetorical uses of obscurity; a style which at first intrigues and dazzles, but in the end bewilders and disgusts.

One may well ask: if the forms of discourse that answer to this description are kept outside the reach of a critical apparatus; if, in repudiating the ideas of proof or cure or any other scheme of validation, they escape the sanctions that are enforced upon physicians or historians or laboratory scientists; what, then, is to stop them expanding their influence and pretensions without limit? The answer is clear enough. They are not repudiated, but as fashion changes they will be forgotten, to be classified as a scientific curiosity or literary *genre*, as dead as the Philosophic Romances of the 17th or the System Philosophies of the 19th centuries. This fate is the unhappiest that could befall them, because their practitioners want above all else to be in the swim, to be counted among the makers of cultivated opinion, rare spirits whose thought transcends the busy preoccupations of common people. To be forgotten is the worst of their bad dreams.

THERE IS AN ABERRATION of science or of the scientific style of thinking which has come to be known as "scientism." Roughly speaking, it stands for the belief that science knows or will soon know all the answers; and it has about it the corrupting smugness of any system of opinions which contains its own antidote to disbelief. I suppose my lecture has been about *poetism*, an aberration of imaginative literature about which (*mutatis mutandis*) one could say very much the same. It stands for the belief that imaginative insight and a mysteriously privileged sensibility can tell us all the answers that are truly worthy of being sought or being known, and its practitioners are rallied by the inane war-cry that Beauty is equivalent to Truth.

For scientism, imaginative literature is not much more than a branch of the entertainment industry; for poetism, scientists are engaged in merely parsing the Book of Nature, the inner meaning of which they are altogether unqualified to comprehend. Poetism is only a minor ailment of literature, but an ailment that literature is prone to through an excess of its own exuberant strength; in the time-scale of literature, its outbreak seems to be a seasonal event. Scientism, for just the same reason, is latent in scientific thinking—a malady to which, because of our constitutions, we scientists are specially predisposed. Both views are about equally contemptible, so there is no need for us to take sides. No one need beat his breast and say "Now *I* am on the side of the poets," because poets are not really on that side and scientists not really on the other. I admit that it was mainly a love of science that prompted me to speak as I have done, but it could equally well have been a love of literature, and if it had been so, I do not think that my lecture would have been so very different from that which you have just heard.

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Nigel Dennis

Fertility Rites

What is this strange stone monolith—
Neolithic, holes bored in it, spirals
Adorning it? "I'll answer for it,"
Says the professor of archaeology, "that's
Fertility rites, that's what that is."

What is this funny old archway—stone
Balls scattered at the base, a place
Where a pole went? "Take it from me,"
Says the professor of archaeology, "that
Was for fertility rites, that was."

And so it is that everywhere we go—
Mesopotamia, Middlesex, Mongolia, deserts with
Painted caves—everybody agrees that
Whatever the site may be we can rest content
It was the shrine of those old fertility rites.

Looking backwards from nowadays—from these
Unsanctified times—I tip the hat I do not wear to
Forbears who went to such tremendous pains,
Backed up by their stupendous Janes,
To pay unwavering tribute to fertility.

How can we who never go to Church—we
Who are quite without any type of rite—
Fail to admire forefathers who spent the
Bulk of their lives, the bulk of their dames,
In church, endlessly asserting their rites?

Those devout men had every chance—they were in
No way constrained—to do more field-work, to smash
More pots into sherds, to build stone bungalows.
But they scorned these material acts; they threw their
Whole being into church-going, to do their rites.

Darling, we are never told what they did—did
In church—we are not told. But you, darling, though
Comparatively slim, can guess, because you know
What rites like that are like. Yes, you and I have
Worked out together what rites like that were like.

Nothing worries me about those rites—those long
Prehistoric religious devotions—except a suspicion
That perhaps they never happened. Even granting
The zeal, the stamina, the crying need for fertility,
I am oppressed by an absence of hard evidence.

I think continually of the fertility—I mean
The fecund mentality—of professors of archaeology. The
Use of one all-embracing hypothesis is plain to see:
"Proffer me any site, I'll posit one rite." Yet I, in my dubiety,
Ask still: were such our fathers, was such their piety?

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Robert Skidelsky

Politics is not Enough

On the "Dying Metaphor" of National Interest

SOME TIME AGO, I came across a phrase in an article by Professor Max Beloff which had a curiously old-fashioned ring:

> In the absence of a written constitution there exists almost no impediment to the absolute subordination of the national interest... to the convenience of the party in power.[1]

The archaic impression was conveyed by the phrase "the national interest." It is true that it still has its rhetorical uses. In 1966 Harold Wilson was asked whether he would consider forming a National Government. "We already have a national government," he replied. But the rhetoric sounded stale. His references to the Dunkirk Spirit likewise conjured up the vision of a consummate politician pulling out some rather tawdry emotional stops from his vast repertoire of mumbo-jumbo; and this feeling was not just based on a mistrust of Wilson himself. To Conservatives it seemed that the Prime Minister's remarks were designed only too obviously to improve the fortunes of the Labour government; while Socialists did not feel they had anything very much in common with those wicked capitalists and profiteers whom Wilson had attacked with such vehemence in his pre-election speeches. The Dunkirk Spirit, with all its emotional overtones, had attained the status of what George Orwell called a "dying metaphor," one no longer capable of evoking the desired response. It was no longer part of a living political tradition.

Why then return to it? The reason is the same as that which has prompted many people over the last five years to reopen the debate on English institutions. When things have been going seriously wrong it is both inevitable and right that we should start questioning the conventional wisdom which rules our lives. This questioning has been proceeding apace in the last few years; its conclusions seem likely to provide the conventional wisdom of the next fifty years. The Civil Service, the trade unions, the managers, the educational system, have all been duly castigated for their inefficiency, amateurism, and their generally outmoded conceptions, Robbins, Donovan, and Fulton have all provided us with serviceable platitudes for use in current controversy.

All of which makes it the more surprising that we have not had any comparable enquiry into the *political* arrangements by which our affairs are managed. Of course, there is no shortage of reference to the general disillusionment with politics; popular manifestations such as the students' revolt, the march of the dockers, Scottish and Welsh Nationalism, the public opinion poll findings, all point in the same direction; yet these phenomena have by no means received the careful attention that they deserve, being deemed more fitting for the chatty article, or the after-dinner *mot*, than for serious analysis. And this immunity of our present political arrangements from sustained criticism is all the more surprising when we remember that in our highly centralised system of government almost all initiative for change and reform must flow from the political centre. It is all very well to talk about the failings of the Civil Service; yet the civil servant is part of a hierarchy of command at whose apex is the Minister. And if the Minister is a dud, what can the civil servant do? It is not his function,

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[1] "Are the Political Parties Indispensable?", *The Times*, 16 April 1968.

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and it is certainly not in his power, to initiate the changes which circumstances may require.

ANY SERIOUS ANALYSIS of our present malaise, in other words, must start with such questions as —How do we get the right minister in charge of a department? How do we get a prime minister capable of facing up to the challenges of his office? Can we afford a system which distributes the offices of state as a reward for faithful party service, or in response to the need for a delicate balancing of party forces? And these questions in turn raise others concerning the value of party government, the role of party ideology and the party struggle in distorting the understanding of problems faced and inhibiting their solution. These are fundamental and possibly dangerous questions. But if we are to have a really searching enquiry into the causes of our present discontents, they cannot be evaded. Hence as a historian I turn back to the tradition of the National Interest which antedated the tradition of the two-party system by several hundred years, and which is likely to outlive it by as long. Whether it throws light, as I hope it will, on some of the points just raised, will be for the reader to judge.

THAT THE National Interest once was an element, indeed the central element, in the British political tradition is indisputable. In the sixteenth century we find it embodied in the Monarch. Parliament was still occupied primarily with local affairs; its task was essentially to represent the locality at the centre. Its only national duty was to vote the monarch supplies for his pursuit of national aims.

By the end of the 18th century, the function of representing the National Interest had shifted to the Whig oligarchs who claimed, through the Commons, to represent the whole community. Now it was the monarch and the Lords who seemed to stand for "particular interests" against the National Interest represented by the Commons. In Burke's view the House of Commons was "a deliberative assembly of one nation with one interest—where not local prejudices ought to guide but the general good resulting from the general reason of the whole."[2] Reason and judgment were seen as the creators of a positive consensus. The emphasis on these qualities meant that the Parliamentarian had to be himself a man of wisdom and ability, not a typical or popular man. Rotten boroughs and influence were defended on the grounds that they enabled this kind of man to enter Parliament. The American theorist James Madison (in the tenth *Federalist* paper) defends representation not just on the ground that it is physically impossible to assemble all the people, but as a means by which the public views may be refined "by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country."

The dominant liberal political thought of the mid-19th century still retained its belief in a "disinterested" ruling class. As Beer has argued, the middle class demanded power in the 19th century not only because it wanted its interests represented, but because *middle* to it meant *general*. It was the class that embodied the general interest, suffering from extremes of neither wealth nor poverty, "anxious for the maintenance of order and the security of property as it is hostile to corruption and oppression" (Macaulay). It generalised Burke's idea of a Parliament of 600 men of reason and judgment into the idea of a class governed by reason and ruling in the interests of the whole. As we can see in retrospect, this generalisation in fact marked the beginning of the end of the idea of the National Interest. One man may be accepted as disinterested, even 600 men elected as individuals; but not a whole class, which too obviously has a class interest.

THE LIBERAL IDEAL WAS succeeded by the Radical theory of popular or referendal democracy. In this version the statesman appealed direct to the people over the heads of the "special interests." Once more in retrospect we can see this as a transitional stage in British democratic evolution, before the idea of party government had finally solidified, and when the newly enfranchised masses were still susceptible to popular oratory: just as the previous age was dubbed "the Golden Age of the Private M.P.," so the fifty years leading to the first World War were the Golden Age of Oratory, represented by Bright, Gladstone, Chamberlain, Lloyd George, and to a certain extent by the early Labour pioneers like Keir Hardie and MacDonald. As A. J. P. Taylor writes in his essay on Lloyd George (1961):

> He aimed . . . at becoming the sole voice of the people by destroying the existing parties and reducing politics to a collection of individuals. . . . Lloyd George's success marked the last triumph of individual enterprise. His fall showed that the days of individual enterprise were over. Combines ruled, in politics, as in everything else.

In the word "combine" we have one key to the politics which replaced those of Radical popularism. It is the system of politics which Beer

[2] Election speech of 1774, quoted in S. Beer, *Modern British Politics* (1965), p. 115. This and the following paragraphs are based on Beer.

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has described as "collectivist." Particular interests which had previously been local or temporary now came to assume the status of permanent class or group interests reflecting an objective social diversity or conflict. A sociology derived from Marxism popularised the notion that ideas and attitudes are derivative of class interest. Parliament became the arena in which disciplined parties fought for the interests of their supporters.

OF COURSE, neither the Labour nor Tory party entirely abandoned the rhetoric of National Interest. The programme deriving from Socialism "is conceived to be in the long-run interests of the whole nation" (Beer). In the same way, Tory democracy spoke of "One Nation." But the important fact was that both these claims were seen by their opponents largely as P.R. jobs—with a rhetoric deriving from an older tradition, perhaps, but one invalidated by the actual nature of the parties and the causes they espoused.

This stratification of the nation along class and interest lines was greatly assisted by two developments. The first was the growth of ideology. At a certain period in English history—between roughly 1900 and 1918—a system of ideas called "Socialism" came to be identified with the economic and social interests of the workers. How and why this came about is still a subject for much debate. What seems clear is that the Labour Party and the Socialist ideology which it expressed came to satisfy an emotional need for the workers: an assurance of a Golden Age to come, and a sense of belonging to a great fellowship engaged in a high moral quest. "The Labour Party to me... has been a form of church," writes Desmond Donnelly in his *Gadarene '68*.

Indeed it seems likely that in a system where interest or group politics dominates, requests for particular benefits *have* to be rationalised into demands for a better moral order. In this way, the new moral order (or the restoration of an old moral order) becomes a substitute for the idea of a present National Interest which none of the competing groups can plausibly claim to represent. The failure of the inter-War generation to cope with the unemployment problem is partly due precisely to this hardening of the two main political groups round antithetical ideologies—Socialism and *laissez-faire* Capitalism—which paradoxically offered a united front against any Middle Way.

The second development which destroyed the idea of the National Interest was the gradual loss of any external purpose: as Northcote Parkinson has plausibly argued in his *Left Luggage* (1968), Britain's unity had been largely forged by its sense of external mission, whether that of defence against an aggressor or in creating an Empire. Latterly, the disappearance of Empire has robbed the country of any sense of a continuing purpose, inaugurating a rather desultory debate about Britain's proper "role" in the world; while the old escape into war, a favourite political device for evading domestic problems, is no longer possible, at least not for the foreseeable future.

The main difficulty in resolving this debate about our "role" is caused by the discrediting of the idea of the National Interest in foreign relations. This means it can no longer be brought into service so easily as a unifying concept. Liberals and progressives have always argued that the pursuit of national aims causes wars; that the first principle of international conduct must be to maintain a detached attitude to one's own interests. As Paul Foot writes: "the genuine internationalist [namely, himself] for whom the British are no more important than the people of any other nation... reacts violently to any suggestion which implies the further separation of nation from nation...."[3] This is fine. Unfortunately the ideal of international brotherhood has never aroused the slightest enthusiasm among the majority. It is therefore quite unserviceable as a unifying idea. De Gaulle was only stating the obvious when he declared that the nation is at present the only political community capable of evoking the affections and loyalties of a people. This point will be considered in more detail later. His own formula which has, on the whole, worked remarkably successfully, despite the May disturbances, was explained to Dulles in 1958:

> ... at this crucial moment there is nothing more important for the French people than to be made to believe again that France is a great power.... "Grandeur" is not a romantic notion; it is a reality, a tangible factor in a nation's efforts. The French have the need to believe in themselves and the right to believe in themselves.[4]

THE RESULT OF THESE TWO developments—the growth of ideology and the loss of an external national purpose—has been to create a situation where any appeal to the National Interest (except possibly in war) is greeted with the incredulity I noted earlier. People have not only turned their gaze from outside to inside, in a masochistic orgy of self-questioning, but they view the inside through the distorting spec-

[3] *Immigration and Race in British Politics* (1964), p. 249.

[4] David Schoenbrun, *The Three Lives of Charles de Gaulle* (1966), p. 280.

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tacles of ideological commitment. The idea that there are national, as opposed to class, group, or individual, concerns, has simply gone by the board. We live in a situation where everyone's *mauvais fois* is accepted without question: at least intellectually. Experience and feeling tell people that they are members of a national community, with a common culture, a common tradition and common interests; intellect on the other hand casts them into rigid social roles, makes them the protagonists in social and ideological battles whose rules were laid down long ago, and which are as much sanctified by ritual, habit, and rhetoric as any of the more primitive allegiances sacrificed in the name of progress. As Parkinson writes: "Nothing can be more damaging to the union official than the rumour that he is friendly with the management." It becomes, as we see, a vicious circle: one starts from a certain premise and by acting upon it helps to confirm it.

The antagonisms rooted in our whole political and social system express themselves in a markedly defensive attitude towards change. Because each group feels that any proposal for change, unless it emanates from itself, is designed to do it down in some way, the attitude arises that nothing must change unless everything is adjusted in proportion. It is this, argues Michael Shanks [ENCOUNTER, "Suicide of a Nation?", July 1963], that is at the root of our economic decline:

> The issues that arouse the British people are not issues of national efficiency but issues of "social justice" or "fair play." We are unwilling to advance if it means that anybody is going to be hurt. This means, of course, that social justice has to be defined almost exclusively in terms of the past. Each section of the community stakes out its appeal, before the court of public opinion, by reference to what it has traditionally expected and enjoyed.

THE IDEA THAT the conciliation of conflict rather than the search for agreement is the primary task of a political system has won such widespread acceptance that it is worth examining for a moment or two its intellectual premises. A typical statement is to be found in Bernard Crick's *In Defence of Politics*,[5] a charming and erudite work, though, as I hope to show, largely mistaken in its emphasis.

Politics, Crick says, "is simply the activity by which government is made possible when differing interests in an area to be governed grow powerful enough to need to be conciliated." Elsewhere he defines it more shortly as "a way of ruling in divided societies without undue violence." More specifically it is "the activity by which different interests within a given territory are conciliated." Politics thus presupposes a reluctance to use the degree of force necessary to secure consent or order by coercion.

Crick assumes that all societies at a certain stage in their economic and cultural evolution do become divided in this way. Politics, therefore, rather than any fundamental agreement, is what holds a society together. Agreement about fundamentals is never likely except by force or fraud. "What holds a free state together is neither general will nor a common interest, but simply politics itself." It is important to note that Crick believes the basis of relationship between persons to be one of conflict. "The more one is involved in relationships with others, the more conflicts of interest, or of character and circumstance will arise." The only fundamental common interest any community shares is survival: all other shared interests are benefits added by politics in a free community, by coercion in other societies.

It follows from these views that politics is mostly concerned with bargaining and compromise. It is "a messy, mundane, inconclusive, tangled business." The politician has to regard political morality as "simply that level of moral life . . . which pursues a logic of consequences in the world as it is." He is regarded as insincere, a hypocrite, a fixer. "To some the politician is a standing insult to personal idealism, because . . . he has to treat deep divergences of values as . . . mere differences of preference or opinion." A politician, says Crick, is regarded as "an arse upon which everyone has sat except a man." He may not be admirable, but he is necessary.

Crick follows modern British political convention in making an exception in time of war. "This need to consult cannot eliminate the other type of survival which is military, or at least militant, the capacity to act without compromise or normal consultation in a state of emergency, whether flood, famine, pestilence, or war itself." He quotes Machiavelli: "Those republics which in time of danger cannot resort to dictatorship will generally be ruined when grave occasions occur." But we must make sure that these emergencies "do not destroy the real distinction between the time of politics and the time of sovereignty."

PERHAPS THE MOST STRIKING feature of Crick's argument is his Hobbesian view of man: conflict is the natural condition of any relationship. The closer the relationship, the more opportunity for conflict exists and the more likely

[5] Weidenfeld & Nicolson (1962); Penguin Books.

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it is to be realised. Yet we all know that close relationships can lead to love and tolerance as well as to conflict. This is not as sentimental as it sounds. Crick assumes that the common interest is largely the result of politics, not the other way round. The only common interest which precedes politics, indeed which makes politics possible, is the interest in survival. But is this plausible? Presumably all men wherever they are have an interest in survival. Why, then, do nations not practise politics between each other to the extent that they practise it within themselves? Why do they fight foreign wars and not, on the whole, civil wars? The preference for conciliation, it is clear, does not exist nearly as strongly in international affairs as in domestic ones. It follows that an interest in survival cannot alone explain that "preference for conciliation" which makes politics possible within a nation.

What this something "extra" is which promotes domestic peace while sanctioning foreign conflict is quite simply the common affections which exist within any long-established political community, a feeling for its people, its culture, its traditions, its history. This sounds banal and it would hardly be worth stating, but for the fact that it is so often ignored. It is this which makes effective politics possible; it is this which also makes politics less necessary than Crick supposes. For it means that one can rely on something more than a Hobbesian expediency to keep a nation together and give it common purposes.

It is really extraordinary how blind political commentators are to this elementary fact. For example, the recent "Back Britain Movement" originated in an entirely spontaneous desire by many different people in many different walks of life to help their country. Of course it was naïve. But it had certainly succeeded in capturing popular imagination by the time it was killed off by the hostility and contempt of the "political" institutions.

Now it may be *possible* to reduce the political content of a system of government without inevitable recourse to coercion or fraud. Nevertheless, it does carry undeniable risks, so the question to be asked is: is it *necessary* or *desirable*?

To REVERT ONCE MORE to Crick's argument: he allows that politics may be suspended in time of a recognisable external threat, but also admits that "survival at all can often demand a highly conscious degree of change, whether in agricultural techniques, in military strategy, in the pattern of trade, in the ownership of industry, or in the framework of government institutions." Thus the "survival" problem in modern conditions is not necessarily limited to enemy attack. Is this type of problem a political problem, in Crick's definition of politics, or is it what we might call a Common Interest problem? Crick does not seem sure. At one point he seems to say that a precondition of politics itself is "a society where there is economic growth." On the whole, though, he inclines to the view that this range of survival problems, unlike enemy attack, does not come within the normal definition of crisis or emergency, but rather into the sphere of competing interests to be conciliated. But how successfully can a purely political system cope with the problem of rapid and continuous peacetime adaptation?

Crick's optimism, I suspect, stems from an inadequate conception of compromise. Throughout he seems to assume that bargaining and conciliation lead to a result. Some kind of trade union/employer relationship is postulated, with a conclusion roughly mid-way between two sets of claims. Thus bargaining is ultimately progressive: not everything one or the other side wants is attained, but something. But this is by no means invariably true. One solution to a conflict situation may be a stand-off. For many choices are not of the kind that can be settled by compromise: they are conflicting options, rather than different points on a linear scale. For example, it could be argued that Britain faces a choice between Europe and the United States. A progressive result in this conflict can only be secured by the triumph of one view or another. But politics, as Crick says, aims always to keep open an escape route, to enable combatants to save face. The easiest way out for a political system faced with really fundamental choices is to do nothing, to wait for the situation to develop, so that the "facts" may ultimately impose a solution. But this is the reverse of building into a governmental system "a highly conscious degree of change."

In assessing the chances of a political system coping with really serious problems, Crick also ignores the extent to which the practice of politics brings its practitioners into discredit, especially in times of difficulty, thus paving the way for disillusionment which leads to violence. The political scientist may argue that hypocrisy, insincerity, opportunism, "fixing" are good for government; but the mass of the people cannot be expected to see the situation in this light. And in fact there *is* something unsatisfactory about a political psychology that converts private vices into public virtues. The "master science" cannot maintain unchallenged its position in times of difficulty if it relies on attributes which most people despise. A tension will be created which will prove destabilising, rather than stabilising.

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IF THESE CONSIDERATIONS have any validity, it would appear to follow that politics may not be enough—not even in "normal" times, given that "normal" now includes a conscious commitment to rapid change. The way out of the dilemma is not a greater use of coercion, but a more positive attempt to evoke forces of agreement, common interest, and social affection for national purposes. This implies some reinstatement in theory of the idea of the "Nation" or the National Interest, as opposed to simply viewing it as a collection of differing interests held together by politics.

This view has recently, for the first time in many years, been revived in one form or another by a number of political commentators (*e.g.*, Professor Beloff), though they are still very much in a minority. The reason is plain: mere "politics" has notably failed to overcome problems of adaptation, both in the economy and in Britain's world outlook, which, if they are not overcome in the foreseeable future, threaten an increasingly rapid and irreversible decline, and with it the violence that always accompanies despair. Lord Snow has compared us to Venice: "They were fond of the pattern, just as we are fond of ours. They never found the will to break it. . . ."

It is remarkable how rapid this revulsion against "politics" has been. We need only think back two years or so to a time when political commentators like Henry Fairlie, Ronald Butt, even Peregrine Worsthorne, were enthusing about Wilson's wonderful skills as a politician, and how these could well be the saving of England. More than ever the Presidential theory of government seemed confirmed; Harold Wilson, master of television and public relations, spoke with all the authority of a national leader. In recent months his standing in the public opinion polls has been the lowest ever recorded by a British prime minister, with only 27 per cent saying "Satisfied"; an anxious party tries to keep him well away from television; he is overruled in the Cabinet; even the sales of the raincoat he constantly wore have suffered a catastrophic fall. The commentators were not wrong. Harold Wilson was and is a superb politician. The lesson of the last few years, surely, is that politics is not always enough. Can history offer any guide to an alternative?

THE PROBLEM of how to give institutional expression to the concept of the National Interest is not a new one. It became acute in the last quarter of the 19th century, once the emergence of disciplined parties, divided from each other by strong and seemingly permanent ideologies and interests, had removed that element of flexibility and tacit cooperation which had previously sustained the British system. It appeared to many of the ablest of British politicians nothing short of a tragedy that they should be permanently separated from each other, especially in times of difficulty, by the imperatives of the party game. "I feel so much," remarks Lord Evesham in H. G. Wells' novel, *The New Machiavelli* (1911), "that the best people in every party converge." How to give this convergence some definite shape was the problem. It cannot be pretended that the various attempts to solve it came to very much. But they are worth noticing because they represent a part of the British political tradition too often ignored, which may yet prove serviceable in the future.

The first serious effort occurred in 1887 when both Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Randolph Churchill found themselves adrift from their main national organisations. Chamberlain, a radical reformer, rejected Irish Home Rule because it threatened the integrity of empire; Churchill, a staunch imperialist, was the apostle of "Tory democracy." They dreamt, in the words of Lord Randolph's son:

> of a great new party—free alike from vested interests and from holy formulas, able to deal with national problems on their merits, patient to respect the precious bequests of the past, strong to drive forward the wheels of progress.[6]

Their dreams came to nothing. Personal differences played a part; more importantly, they were generals without armies, or more accurately, generals whose armies, while sharing many of their aims, wanted to return as quickly as possible to the secure haven of a party anchorage. Labouchere wrote to Churchill: "You ignore the power of the 'machine.' It has crushed many an able man." Chamberlain worked his passage into the Conservative Party; Churchill, ill and disappointed, took to foreign travel.

Lord Rosebery was another brilliant personality of this period who gradually found himself without followers. Prime Minister in 1895, he hankered for a party of National Efficiency to be formed out of a union of the "old Liberal spirit with the new Imperial spirit." This had some initial appeal to Liberals searching for a vote-catching slogan to get them back into power at the beginning of the century; when Conservative quarrels promised to achieve the same result, they rapidly lost interest in the idea.

[6] Winston Churchill, *Lord Randolph Churchill* (1906), p. 659.

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The next of the convergers was Lloyd George. In 1910, at the height of the House of Lords constitutional crisis, Lloyd George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, urged a National Government in the following terms:

> [He] argued that parties would always disagree on certain vital issues... but he contended that at that moment the questions which were of most vital importance to the well-being of the community were all of a character capable of being settled by the action of the two great parties without any sacrifice of principle on the part of either, and he urged with great force and sincerity that the rapid rise of great foreign competitors had put us into a position where no time ought to be lost in repairing the deficiencies of our national system and putting our machinery into better order so as to equip us for a situation with which we had never before been confronted.

A number of Conservative leaders—Austen Chamberlain, Bonar Law, and F. E. Smith—were very much in favour; but the scheme collapsed for a familiar reason:

> As the conversation developed, however, it appeared that on our side it involved counter-concessions... for which the bulk of our party were wholly unprepared....[7]

The same comment would no doubt have applied to the majority of the Liberal Party.

The same actors were still at it in 1919. This time Lloyd George was Prime Minister of a coalition of Unionists and Liberals. He proposed to fuse the two organisations into a semi-permanent Centre Party to tackle the enormous problems of post-war reconstruction. The idea attracted many of the leaders of both sides, but once again their followers refused to follow, and Stanley Baldwin finally put paid to the plan at the famous Carlton Club meeting of 1922.

THE NEXT INITIATIVE came from the leader of the Labour Party, Ramsay MacDonald. It is symptomatic of the political sentiment of our time that the following very sensible remarks in the debate on the King's Speech of 1929 were later made the basis of hysterical accusations of "betrayal":

> I wonder how far it is possible, without in any way abandoning any of our party positions, without in any way surrendering any item of our party principles, to consider ourselves more as a Council of State and less as arrayed regiments facing each other in battle... so that by putting our ideas into a common pool we can bring out ... legislation and administration which will be of substantial benefit for the nation as a whole.

MacDonald was thinking primarily of the unemployment problem which cut right across party lines. He was suggesting, perhaps naïvely, that if the 600 or so M.P.s put their minds to it, "free alike from vested interests and from holy formulas," a consensus on the right course of action would emerge. Churchill a year later buttressed the same argument with an appeal to an earlier tradition:

> Our ancestors would not have used so much parliamentary time on a single topic in this sporadic and ineffectual manner.... They would have pursued the topic with continuous persistence and resolutions, descending from the general to the particular and throwing out at each stage those who disagreed with what was proposed so as to build up the main theme of House of Commons opinion.

The inter-war period was especially fertile in attempts to get together the ablest politicians to tackle the desperate economic situation. In 1930 a number of politicians and press lords tried to form a National Party to fight unemployment. Some familiar plotters were involved: Lloyd George (Liberal), Churchill (Conservative), Beaverbrook (Conservative?); also Sir Oswald Mosley (Labour) who had just resigned from MacDonald's Government, Harold Macmillan (Conservative), Aneurin Bevan (Labour), and others. Some 50 M.P.s of all parties were privy to the scheme, and something approaching that number might have actually come out in support, had a firm lead been given.

The conspiracy collapsed for reasons which might appear equally cogent today. Tory dissidents refused to cut themselves off from a party which had every prospect of winning the next election. Labour dissidents refused to destroy their own government, however incompetent it might be. Then, as now, all M.P.s were ultimately dependent upon the party machine.

A more insubstantial attempt to revitalise Lloyd George's Centre Party idea was tried by Sir Oswald Mosley in 1931 when he formed the New Party. C. F. Melville wrote in the *Fortnightly Review* of May 1931:

> It is obvious that the New Party hopes—and it seems to me to have a good chance of eventually realising this hope, provided it can succeed in reconciling the many aims and as many interests which it represents—to become the principal magnet of a new "Centrum" in British party politics.... In this sense it cuts right across the old arguments about *Left* and *Right*.

[7] Sir Austen Chamberlain, *Politics From Inside* (1927), pp. 192–3.

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What happened was melancholy, but to a large extent inevitable. The New Party's electoral appeal was undercut by the National Government formed in August 1931; and the party itself split into Fascists and Communists: its National Interest policy was simply not strong enough to keep it together.

Harold Macmillan was very tempted to join the New Party; instead, he stuck to the Tories and earned his reward in 1957. Nevertheless, he was notable for that quality which Henry Fairlie in his *Life of Politics* (1968) ascribes to all great politicians—"a cross-bench mind." In the 1930s Macmillan worked tirelessly to formulate an all-party or non-party approach to the economic problem:

> This argument [he wrote in 1938] between the advocates of Socialism ... and the defenders of Capitalism ... takes little or no account of the changes that are taking place all the time in the society they are arguing about.

Lloyd George might nod his approval from Churt, Robert Boothby thunder his from the floor of the House, but few others took the slightest notice: party rivalry prevented the dialogue—and the action—that might have saved millions from the cruel fate of the dole.

THE 1940S WERE OCCUPIED in fighting a war and completing the Socialist programme of 1918; the 1950s inaugurated a boom unprecedented in its achievement and length. Neither period produced the circumstances or problems in which National Interest sentiment thrives or is relevant. The 1960s by contrast have been a decade of problems and a growing consciousness of political failure. Alone among the front rank of politicians, Jo Grimond has drawn the moral which those in the National Interest tradition have been accustomed to draw. At the Liberal Conference of 1966 he declared:

> One lesson of the present events is that we cannot afford a political system which has been shown, not over a year or two but over the last 40 years, to have the following defects. Based on the supposed interests of management and labour, it provides no leverage for the kind of non-sectarian policies which were needed over unemployment in the 'twenties, appeasement in the 'thirties, and productivity today. It keeps the Opposition in ignorance of essential facts and forces them into opportunism. It breeds disillusion among the electors because they sense that neither the central government, Parliament, nor the local authorities, nor the Civil Service are equipped to tackle our difficulties. They also feel that they, the people of the country, have less and less control over their destinies and that democracy is in danger of becoming a meaningless word in Britain (*The Guardian*, 18 January 1967).

It is sometimes argued that Lloyd George and Grimond were forced into a "cross-bench" position because the Liberal Party to which they were attached had so little chance of winning power. But this ignores the fact that Lloyd George tried to get a National Government when he was Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1910. It also ignores the fact that many of the ablest politicians of the other parties shared the same outlook. Joseph Chamberlain, Winston Churchill, and Harold Macmillan, the three greatest Conservative leaders of the recent period, were none of them party men. On the Labour side, the cross-bench mentality has been less marked: but even here we may point to MacDonald, Mosley, and Bevan, who at different periods in their lives were all prepared to advocate a "national" approach to peace-time difficulties. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the best men in all parties, while forced with varying degrees of conviction into the public postures of the party game, have always cherished a belief in the possibility and desirability of working together to solve national problems. Far from being the woolly romanticism of the parlour politician, this was the serious conviction of serious public men, and as such deserves notice and respect.

WHAT HAS BEEN the inspiration behind these various proposals and why have they come to so little?

We may distinguish between a *strong* and a *weak* inspiration. The strong inspiration was based on the belief that the major national differences could be reconciled within a wider political framework. Thus Chamberlain, Rosebery, the Webbs, Mosley (in his fascist period), were all convinced that the warring impulses of social reform and imperialist sentiment could be harmonised within a new dynamic social-imperialist party prepared to develop the empire economically for the benefit of the British working-class.[8] Similar tendencies can be discerned in such German thinkers as Friedrich Naumann, whose *Mitteleuropa* concept, later perverted by Hitler, was, in the words of the historian Meinecke, "a wonderful attempt to bring together in an exceedingly rich synthesis both the most spiritual and the most practical and realistic elements in the German people."[9]

[8] For a fascinating discussion of these *fin-de-siècle* strands in English political thought, see B. Semmel, *Imperialism and Social Reform* (1960).

[9] Friedrich Meinecke, *The German Catastrophe* (1945), p. 19.

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The reference to Hitler illustrates the dangers of this approach. It tended to view class conflict as "artificial," the product of political selfishness, and thus led directly to the one-party state, imposing unity by fear and terror. In its more moderate form it has found recent expression in Gaullism; and it has always been the leading idea behind Tory Democracy, as the following eloquent passage from Winston Churchill's life of his father reveals:

> There is an England which stretches far beyond the well-drilled masses who are assembled by party machinery to salute with appropriate acclamation the utterances of their recognised fuglemen; an England of wise men who gaze without self-deception at the failings and follies of both political parties; of brave and earnest men who find in neither faction fair scope for the effort that is in them; of "poor men" who increasingly doubt the sincerity of party philanthropy....

The *weak* version of the National Interest idea, expounded chiefly by Lloyd George, was much more pragmatic. It did not deny the existence of permanent social and ideological cleavages in modern society; it viewed with profound scepticism any talk of a wonderfully rich synthesis of antagonistic impulses. What it did deny was that these permanent cleavages, around which the basic party conflict was constructed, were always central and dominating. The modern period especially has brought to the fore problems of adaptation and survival which have very little to do with the permanent political battle. Unemployment was one such problem in the inter-war period; growth is another today.

When questions of this type came to dominate the political agenda, it always seemed regrettable to politicians like Lloyd George that the demands of party conflict should separate all those willing to deal with them constructively and on their merits. There was a time for relaxation and a time for effort; and the two situations demanded different types of political organisation, the one being able to afford a dispersal of talent and ideas, the other demanding their concentration on immediate objectives. This distinction has always been recognised in war: the argument was that it should be recognised in peace as well; otherwise a nation might never succeed in breaking free from a pattern of obsolescence and rigidity dragging it down to ruin. Central to this view was the belief that no single party possessed sufficient *authority* or *motive* for tackling national problems in a resolute manner. Its attempts at a constructive solution would always be misinterpreted and, consequently, undermined by an Opposition clamouring to return to office; while the partisan expectations of its supporters would not tolerate measures, however necessary, which damaged their own interests. Truth, as Baldwin once remarked, is many-sided and it was in each party's interest to attack that side of it espoused by its political opponents.

As an instance we may take Labour's reluctance to devalue between 1964 and 1967. Many commentators now agree that an important subjective constraint was the feeling that a *Labour* Government could not afford the discredit of another devaluation. Given the nature of the party struggle—especially in the tight situation of 1964–6—this was a perfectly reasonable view; but it can hardly be claimed that the British people as a whole benefited from it.

THE CAUSES OF THE FAILURE of what I have called National Interest thinking are reasonably clear. With the exception of Lloyd George, politicians have generally advanced National Interest conceptions during periods of estrangement from their parties; and even for Lloyd George, a centre party was, by 1919, his only real guarantee against permanent opposition. Either these opposition personalities have remained in opposition, in which case their ideas have ceased to be influential, or they have rejoined their parties as offering them the sole realistic prospect of power, in which case they have ceased to espouse them.

For the strength of party organisation in recent times has been such that no politician can hope to achieve power independently of it. The great drawback in the *weak* Centre Party theory is that it is almost by definition a gathering of parliamentary leaders without grass-roots support. The outstanding political leaders may to some extent be free of those emotions which anchor the intellect firmly on one side or the other; but their followers are not. The Party militant is being told, in effect, that the struggle to which he has devoted his life is to be interrupted and postponed for some more suitable occasion. Yet the struggle itself has become so institutionalised, in its conferences, its rhetoric, and its organised parliamentary parties, that any such interruption, except in time of war, has become emotionally impossible.

Nor must it be forgotten that for most politicians, with no real chance of power, the game itself—the clever debating point, the plotting and the intrigue, the oratorical triumphs, the cheers of the faithful—provides the great consolations of the political life. Our British system is marvellously geared to frivolity. Argument for argument's sake is as much a pastime of politicians as it is of intellectuals. Argument with a view to reaching a conclusion which

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may serve as the basis of action is, by contrast, a dull and pallid thing; for once the conclusion has been reached, the argument is over. The great beauty of the doctrine of compromise is that it makes possible perpetual argument without result. No principle is sacrificed: the engagement is simply broken off till passions have cooled. There is no doubt considerable virtue in this; indeed, without it a state would be in a perpetual condition of civil war; but it must not be confused with the constructive resolution of difficulties which arises from a determination to argue through a problem to a definite conclusion. Certain leading politicians have always been prepared to do this; most of their followers, engrossed by the game, have not.

National Interest leaders have always claimed that the party divisions do not accurately reflect the mood of the country in times of difficulty; that the parties manufacture feelings they claim to represent. There is a great deal of truth in this. Unlike the constitutional lawyers and political pundits, the British people do not abhor coalitions. On the two occasions in recent history when they have been given the chance to vote for a coalition, they have done so emphatically—in 1931 by an overwhelming majority of 70–30. As I write this, opinion polls show a majority favouring a coalition, or even a "businessman's" government. Political commentators in their eagerness to belittle such a preposterous idea have missed its significance. It is in essence a plea to government to cut out the cant and get on with the job—in other words to tackle the problems it faces in a businesslike way. Far from being hysterical, this demand may strike the unprejudiced observer as being eminently reasonable, the product of a healthy awareness that unless things are put right in the next few years, everyone is going to suffer. That is not, of course, the whole story. Vested interests, divisions of principle, are still there; but so are the reserves of goodwill and national sentiment. To emphasise the one and ignore the other is hardly a luxury that this country can at present afford.

The conclusion of the argument so far is as follows. The idea of government in times of difficulty "from the central point in the political spectrum" (Professor Beloff) is, far from being a dangerous innovation, an honourable part of the British political tradition. The evidence of elections (1918 and 1931) and also public opinion polls suggests that it is accepted by a majority of the British people. Standing in the way of implementing it are the vested interests and ideological commitments of the political organisations. So far they have effectively imposed their own pattern on the history of the last hundred years. Will they continue to do so in the future?

At this point we must face an objection to any change in the existing structure generally considered decisive. So far the argument has been that party government in times of crisis makes for weak government. Most commentators, on the contrary, believe that party government is the condition of strong government. For it is the disciplined majority party of a two-party system that guarantees a government absolute security of parliamentary tenure during its span of office.

This objection is less impressive than it sounds. We may agree that security of parliamentary tenure makes for strong government in normal periods. But is there anything particularly praiseworthy about a system that gives you strong government when you don't need it, and weak government when you do? This point is really fundamental. For strong government in our conventional sense is not so self-evidently desirable as to be beyond question. Britain is not in a permanent state of siege. It is not an underdeveloped country with starvation round the corner. It is a rich, civilised, tolerant, society, well able to afford much less strenuous and interfering government than we, in fact, are used to and which may be necessary elsewhere. I refuse to regard it as a conclusive vindication of our political genius that the Conservative Party enjoyed absolute freedom from parliamentary defeat between 1951 and 1964. What were the enormous benefits that flowed from this? Did we grow faster than other countries with "weak" governments? Did we face up to our long-term problems any more successfully? Did we register a higher proportion of good decisions? It would be a courageous person who would answer these questions in the affirmative.

Conversely, in the two great wars we have fought this century, we have had undeniably "strong" governments, yet these were in no sense party governments. Many of the leading personnel had no party standing at all—including Winston Churchill himself. He was propelled into the premiership in 1940 not by the party faithfuls who would have been quite content to go on voting for Neville Chamberlain, but by a recognition that he was the best man for the job. In fact it was the "strong" party government of Chamberlain that got us into the terrible mess from which the non-party government of Churchill had to extricate us. In view of this, "strong" party government may well be a luxury we can afford to dispense with: it neither gives us the competence which we are entitled to expect in normal times, nor the con-

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structive "national" approach needed in times of crisis.

The basic requirement, then, for any reinstatement of the idea of the National Interest is a considerable loosening of party ties. Hitherto the party politicians have been able to impose their view of the game on the electorate. There are two good reasons for supposing that this might be changing.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, popular discontents with existing political leaders and arrangements seem to run deeper than before. Under the impact of disappointment, people have grown wiser, or perhaps more cynical. In the earlier period they voted, however mistakenly, under the impression that they were being offered a choice, and that governments were elected to carry out popular mandates. Since then the impression has grown that whatever people vote for, the policy will be the same. It has been powerfully reinforced, of course, by the events of the last few years, when, with every advantage of expertise and parliamentary security, the Labour Government notably failed to break free from the Treasury-Banking strait-jacket. People have come to believe that built into the political system is a mechanism for ensuring that popular wishes are permanently frustrated; that deeper longings and hopes are effectively disenfranchised. The plaudits even of the party faithfuls for Messrs. Wilson and Heath sound increasingly hollow; and below, they produce scarcely an echo.

The dull and devious personalities of the politicians themselves have contributed towards this political alienation. But there is a deeper cause. Party rhetoric no longer reflects, to anything like the extent it used to, the issues which people care about and want to discuss. The present party struggle is rooted in conflicts and demands which no longer correspond to modern conditions. Professor Robert Dahl has recently prophesied that in the Western World as a whole political demands will become increasingly detached from "general socio-economic factors." On the one hand we are likely to get shifting and transient coalitions of interest groups brought together for specific objectives —rather like the 19th-century Anti-Corn Law League. More permanent cleavages of ideology and interest will express themselves in "relatively durable orientations... related only casually to the kinds of social forces that have played such an important part in the political life of Western democracies in the past century."[10]

What long-term implications all this has for the future of our political system is as yet unclear. It does suggest, though, that the two-party system as we know it may be coming to an end; that we are getting back to the kind of fluidity which in the early 20th century projected the Labour Party on to the political stage and killed the Liberal Party; in short, to the kind of situation that turned men's minds to the creation of new groups and new patterns in the political system.

Whether the result of the present turmoil will be yet another two-party system, with perhaps the Labour Party giving way to a different coalition, or whether it will be something else, depends not only on circumstances, but on the creative thinking being done today. In this thinking all the disciplines should play their part, none more so than history, which can impel us to examine afresh elements in our tradition, temporarily neglected or submerged, but central to any debate about the politics of the future.

[10] *Government and Opposition* (October 1965), p. 23.

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Melvin J. Lasky

The Metaphysics of Doomsday

John Rogers & Oliver Cromwell

"The days of the old order are numbered. When capitalism goes under, it will go in a crash. We must rise up and help destroy the power structure root and branch. For the first time in history mankind is capable of living free, without the chains of repression or alienation. The present oppression, this totally evil system of war, poverty and exploitation, is doomed. The revolution that is coming will transform all life and culture as we have hitherto known it. . . ."

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CONFERENCE OF REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH IN LONDON, June 1968.

SOME YEARS AGO in this journal, H. R. Trevor-Roper published an ironical study of "Three Foreigners and the Philosophy of the English Revolution." If we are to believe the historian's scholarly exercise in paradox, none of "the real philosophers, and only philosophers," whose "wild, bloodshot mysticism" had made vivid for the gentry of 17th-century England a vision of society which they hoped somehow to attain, were English. Samuel Hartlib, who hoped for "the reformation of the whole world," was a Prussian, from Polish Prussia; he wrote his utopian sketch of *Macaria* after the "pattern" of More and Bacon ("shewing its excellent government, wherein the Inhabitants live in great Prosperity, Health and Happiness . . . Vice punished and virtue rewarded. An example to other Nations"); and he dedicated it in 1641 to Parliament which he thought would "lay the cornerstone of the world's happiness." John Dury, an indefatigable idealist and crusader who even succeeded in bringing Cromwell together with Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel (Spinoza's teacher), came from Elbing on the Baltic Sea. And the famous Comenius, a Bohemian Brother, arrived from Poland (on Hartlib's invitation) to help realise Bacon's *New Atlantis* in England; only when events proved too turbulent did he depart for Sweden, promising John Pym who had been his (and Hartlib's, and Dury's) constant supporter to return "when affairs in England were more tranquil." Comenius never returned, but he was to write: "We are all fellow citizens of one world, all of one blood, all of us human beings. Who shall prevent us from uniting in one republic? Before our eyes there is only one aim: the good of humanity, and we will put aside all considerations of self, of nationality, of sectarianism. . . ." The more representative English mind was, presumably, exempt from what Trevor-Roper calls this kind of "peculiar metaphysics."[1]

Yet, peculiar or not, a vocal, conspicuous, and very English part of this Cromwellian generation of warriors and revolutionaries—the so-called "Fifth Monarchy Men"[2]—was rooted firmly on native ground with their devotion to abstract principle. The evil kingdoms of the world (the first four being, according to cryptic hints in the Book of Daniel, the Babylonian-Assyrian, the Mede-Persian, the Greek, and the Roman) were symbolised as monstrous beasts

[1] ENCOUNTER, February 1960, reprinted in H. R. Trevor-Roper, *Religion, the Reformation, and Social Change* (1967), pp. 237–93. H. Dircks, *A Biographical Memoir of Samuel Hartlib* (1865), pp. 17, 55–6. Christopher Hill, *Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution* (1965), pp. 128–129n.

[2] P. G. Rogers, *The Fifth Monarchy Men* (1966). C. H. Simpkinson, *Thomas Harrison, Regicide and Major-General* (1905). S. R. Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate: 1649–1660*, vol. III (1901), pp. 114–15. C. H. Firth, *The Last Years of the Protectorate* (1909), vol. I, pp. 207–219. See, generally, D. W. Petegorsky, *Left Wing Democracy in the English Civil War* (1940) and P. Zagorin, *A History of Political Thought in the English Revolution* (1954).

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with horns, and their destruction would inaugurate the reign of the just in a fifth and final monarchy.[3] Here were tumultuous men for a time of tumult. "This is the age wherein all men's souls are in a kind of fermentation," a chronicler recorded: "Methinks I see how all the old rubbish must be thrown away, and the rotten building be overthrown and carried away with so powerful an inundation. . . ."

They were called "Fanatiques"; and they were angry men and, some thought, demented. As young John Rogers, later a leader among the Fifth Monarchists, recalled his converter to the cause, "full of zeal, stirring about and thundring and beating the pulpit, I was amazed and thought he was mad; I wondred what he meant, and whilest I was gazing upon him I was struck, and saw it was we that were mad, which made him so; O sayes he! you knotty, rugged, proud piece of flesh! you stony, rocky, flinty, hard heart! what wilt thou doe when thou art roaring in Hell amongst the damned? . . ." This led, he confessed, to his own "raging fits" (in which "every thunder and lightning I look'd upon as my fate. . . .") and to fearful dreams of raining fire. Presumably it also led to that stormy eloquence with which he tried to impress Oliver Cromwell and his generals of the nearness of the millennium, of "all the teetering and tumbling affairs on Earth now. . . ."

THE ROGERS FAMILY itself presents an instructive picture in generational conflict which anticipates more modern versions of the deep temperamental diversity of fathers and sons. Both Nehemiah and John Rogers were preachers, Protestants, and pamphleteers. "Unlike his son," their biographer has noted, "Nehemiah Rogers was of a gentle and peaceful disposition, and of moderate opinions; unlike his son, he had the art of conciliating those with whom he was brought in contact; and unlike his son, he loved to dwell not on political, but on practical religion, not on the iniquity of his adversaries, but on the kindness of his friends. . . ." Not only did the two Rogers appears to be inhabiting two different spiritual worlds in which God spoke with opposing voices: it was as if they were living in two different societies where what was virtuous progress for the father was abhorrent perdition for the son. Two pairs of eyes beheld two nations, neither recognisable in the vision of the other. The following passage is from a sermon which Nehemiah Rogers published in *The Fast Friend* (1658) about six weeks before the death of Oliver Cromwell:

> Let us look backward, and then take forward. How can we, in the first place, but lament and bewail our horrible ingratitude and unkind dealing with so bountiful and liberal a master. Marvellous hath been God's dealings towards this land and nation. Never any nation under Heaven that tasted more of the riches of God's bounty, nor stood more bound to God than this for his liberality. What peace! what plenty! what deliverances! What brightness of heavenly light for fourscore years did we enjoy! Whilst our neighbour nations were wearied with bloody wars, and scarce received any other dew than the blood of the inhabitants, we sat under our vines and fig-trees, having peace within our walls and plenteousness within our palaces. We slept when they bled, we abounded when they wanted, we surfeited when they starved. Our sun did shine out gloriously whilst theirs was set. We had magistrates, ministers, schools, churches, laws, trade, all of the best, whilst they would have been glad of the worst, being deprived of them all. Ask Bohemia, ask Germany, what they thought of us. Would they not say, Happy art thou, O England! who is like unto thee. . . .
>
> Surely whilst we should have been recounting mercies we were finding faults and spying flaws in our state and government. The civil was tyrannical, the ecclesiastical papistical, &c. Nothing pleased, not the hedge, not the wine-press, not the watch-tower, not the watchmen. These we trample down with our own feet, pluck down with our own hands. . . . Thank we unthankfulness for what we have lost.

No such liberal optimism could touch John Rogers, no such national pride or kindly gratitude. He was a young man of fits and rages, holding fast to his boyhood dreams of fire. Even in his worst moments, suffering extremely under the "inhuman tyranny" (especially the fierce prison régime of a Major Bull), he could find dark resources of special consolation. "O it is good," he confesses, "it is good to be beaten into more good rather than be without it, for these blows do make my head ring with the music of Heaven. . . ." And then he added the following remarkable conceit (I have already called attention to this unusual image as found in Dante):[4]

[3] H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel* (1935).

[4] Edward Rogers, *Some Account of the Life and Opinions of a Fifth-Monarchy-Man: chiefly extracted from the Writings of John Rogers, Preacher* (1867), pp. 3–6, 268–9. For Dante, see my "The Prometheans: On the Imagery of Fire & Revolution," ENCOUNTER, October 1968, p. 25.

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> It is said that *Domitian* his mother, when she was of child of him, dreamed that she had a wolf in her, flaming with fire out of his mouth. Such a flame came out of thy mouth, O fierce Bull, as shall be sure to burn thee up....

All was certain to come right in the final conflagration.

The Millennial Moment

REVOLUTION in the 17th century rarely went under its own name; and when it did, it suggested (at least in England) regress rather than progress, a restoration, an astronomical "turning backe to its first place." But if the word was missing the disposition was there, full of Copernican certainties about the great universal event which would happen "when the *Times* are turned and *States* are changed." Rogers' texts almost cry out for the expressive modern political metaphor which alone could integrate all the superlatives and imperatives: "The loud and longing expectations of the People.... This worke is the greatest.... This worke must be done." Rogers came close enough: as he wrote in an open letter to Oliver Cromwell (20 April 1653), "... in the revolution of the times the changes will run their round out, and then the Lord will come to reign." Men could be of diverse minds as to the precise time, "yet all concur in the nighnesse and swiftnesse of its coming upon us."

In Rogers' own calculations the "revolutionary" work would by 1660 get "as farre as Rome" and, by 1666, "be visible in all the earth." Its mysterious entrance would be at once gradual and sudden ("O terrible Doomes-Day"), accompanied by the "shakings of all Nations," and would finally redeem the People from all bondage, corruption, slavery and "bloody base, unjust, accursed, tyrannical Laws." He was only slightly embarrassed that it had been "a Heathen" who had once said, *Fiat justitia, perat mundus*, for he could record that "Jehovah saith now, *Justice shall be done though the world perish for it....*" He associated himself with the prophecies of Joachim of Flora (as had Dante and Columbus before him, paradise seekers on other terrains); and he made Paracelsus' vision his own, "a terrible Eclipse of the Sun, together with great inundations... and after that will be divers tumults, seditions, battels, burnings, and bloodsheddings."

> O! then enters the great change, which shall be called the happy Reformation that followes, which is without deceit, arts, subtleties; but in plaine, naked innocent Laws....

The message was quickly despatched to the established powers. In yet another letter to Cromwell (21 December 1653), Rogers warned of the furious fall that was coming unless "the old State principles of carnal policy" were abandoned. Once Sir Philip Sidney had thought of state policy basing itself not on prophetic stargazing but on experienced analysis of public affairs; for a John Rogers such a turn to humanist reason represented only an additional sign of the anti-Christ. "Let them give you counsel," he proposed to the Lord Protector, "that are conversant with the secrets of God and the visions of these days.... When you find, my Lord, all the wise men of the world to fail you in the visions of these times and seasons by their liberal arts and sciences, philosophical notions or rules, then send for the *Daniels....*" This Daniel was already waiting. The secret vision and the apocalyptic prophecy were all. The liberal changes which the father had welcomed were matters almost of indifference to the son; after the revolution, the millennium.

Indeed, "in these overturning, overturning, overturning days," it was not simply a matter of building the Fifth Monarchy in one country: it would, to be sure, "begin at home" (according to John Spittlehouse's advice to Cromwell in 1653) but it would soon be extended "to the uttermost parts of the earth." The saints would "proclaim liberty to the captives and oppressed ones of other Nations." This was a programme for a world overturning; and on one of his own pamphlets Rogers put the sub-title:

> *or, Doomes-day drawing nigh,*
> *With Thunder and Lightening to Lawyers,*
> *In an Alarum*
> *For New Laws, and the Peoples Liberties from the Norman and Babylonian Yokes*
> *Making Discoverie*
> *Of the present ungodly Laws and Lawyers of the Fourth Monarchy*
> *and of the approach of the Fifth...*

All this was, for a time, put in a cautionary and almost respectful tone. The charges of having stirred up the people to "risings, tumults, or carnal warfare" were denied as false. The Fifth Monarchy's appeal was intended to be moral and religious. "Where is the spirit of old," Rogers asked (he was then all of 26), in a pamphlet which he had secretly and anonymously printed, "yea, the spirit, and faith, and courage that we ourselves had some

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ten, twelve, or fourteen years ago, among the good old Puritans? Yea, the spirit of Englishmen and rational men among us. O! what a change it is! What sheepishness, what sleepiness, what deadness, what darkness, what timorousness, and what tameness is now seized upon us!" As the despair and the nostalgia mounted, Rogers' language grew increasingly intemperate (and, for the constabulary, less ambiguous). "Rout Babylon," he would cry, "and destroy the Beast's dominion root and branch...." Heroic past and future promise seemed to be concentrating themselves into the one present moment which is the supreme release for millennial martyrs.

> ... for it is no time to dally; the danger is great, the day is come, and we are engaged (there is no going off); live or die, stand or fall, fight or flight, is at hand....

The voices of the Fifth Monarchy sounded less and less like other-worldly trumpet calls. Wrath, vengeance, destruction, "blood cryeth unto blood"—how much was rhetoric, and how much rebellion? Cromwell himself was not sure: nor, probably, was John Rogers. But it did seem to be one thing to borrow an ancient image of "the earthquake that shall rend them up by the very roots," and quite another to announce that the wondrous remnant of Witnesses "shall assault the great city, and climb up the wall like men of war...." If the end remained the inauguration of the Fifth and Final Monarchy, were the means still only faith and prayer and the prospect of miracles? A police report quoted this verse which Rogers composed and publicly sang:

> *For God begins to honour us,*
> *The saints are marching on;*
> *The sword is sharp, the arrows swift,*
> *To destroy Babylon:*
> *Against the kingdom of the Beast*
> *We witnesses do rise, &c.*

The soul of the movement hovered between natural impulse and supernatural hope.

[5] Dissatisfied with the brief and partisan account that had been published in the Government's newspaper, the Fifth Monarchy men rushed into print with a version of their own: *The Faithfull Narrative of The Late Testimony and Demand made to Oliver Cromwell, and his Powers, on the Behalf of the Lords Prisoners... to prevent mistakes, and misreports thereupon* (1654). Both texts are in Rogers, *Fifth-Monarchy-Man*, pp. 172–214. There is a convenient summary in *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (ed. Abbott, 1945), vol. III, pp. 607–16.

Words & Swords

On a day in February 1654 there was a most extraordinary confrontation between Oliver Cromwell and John Rogers.[5] The Fifth Monarchist leader, released from Lambeth prison for the interview, led a delegation of twelve—because twelve was "the Lamb's number against the Beast, and the root and square number of the hundred and forty-four thousand in *Rev.* xiv"—and they all presented themselves, each with Bible in hand, at Whitehall. They had been wickedly lied about by paid informers, arbitrarily detained in prison without legal justification, maltreated by constables and gaolers in brutal fashion. And now they would, at long last, speak their piece: with "plainness, foolishness and simplicity . . . without any politic, studied, or artificial frame of words or expressions after the wisdom of the world or the princes of the world." They were not evil-doers, but sufferers for conscience. It was not a distinction that the Guards at Whitehall had in mind—and before they found their way in to see "the Great Man" they had been roughly handled by swords, halberds, and rude abuse. Rogers and several others were finally admitted into the Chamber, crowded with "Machiavellian sycophants"; Cromwell was at the window (where, they noted, "a pistol lay prepared").

"You might have had patience in your words," Cromwell opened. "Now you have liberty to speak... but do not abuse your liberty." He reiterated his own viewpoint: that they were suffering for the evil-doing of seditious transgression, and not for conscience.

> But some words are *actions*, and words are conjugall with *actions*, for actions and *words* are as sharp as swords, and such things I charge you with....

"I desire to know," Rogers began, "in what capacity I stand before you—as a Prisoner, or as a Freeman; as a Christian to a Christian, with equal freedom that others have, or as a slave?" With Cromwell's assurance that "a Prisoner is a Freeman," Rogers was encouraged (if he really needed it) to go on to challenge the indictment. "But your words are not proofs, my Lord. But yet, seeing my way is more clear now, I shall say somewhat more; there is no law of God nor yet of man that makes me such an offender but yours, which is worse than the Roman law and tyranny, that makes a man a Traitor for words."

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The exchanges were quick and furious. "Who calls you a Traitor? I call you not...." "But who made you the judge of Scriptures, my Lord?..." "Why, who will hinder your preaching the Gospel of Christ—yea, His Personal Reign?..." "I know, my Lord, that you are a Sophister. And so it seems, for a part of the truth we may preach, but not the whole, not... against the crying sins of men in power or out of power; for that seems to strike at your interest too much." "Why, what interest is mine?" "A worldly interest, which God will destroy." "Ha!—And do you judge me?" "Yea," Rogers replied, "by the word of the Lord...."

What Rogers looked forward to, as an uncompromising Puritan radical, was either "a fair trial, or a Christian debate." He was to have only a very little of both. What the Lord Protector lacked in theological subtleties he more than made up in a robust sense of the statecraft necessary to defend his own power. He was satisfied that the evidence which had been accumulated proved a case of dangerous subversion. Rogers dismissed all the proffered documentation as the work of informers, as illegal as they were dishonest. "Nor will I be tried," he added, "in hugger-mugger, but if I have offended, it is fit I have open justice." Cromwell, again, found himself in a corner, on the defensive (if, that is, we can have implicit faith in this *Faithfull Narrative*). "Who tries you? and who says it is a charge? Who calls it a charge? I say not so; and see! before you hear them you call them spurious." Rogers felt himself to be above such a legalistic quibble. "O, my Lord, I cannot but mourn for you and your condition, which is sad and to be bewailed. ...I think my condition, through Grace, though a poor prisoner, a great deal better than yours; I would not change with you."

Apparently Cromwell began to lose his temper. "Well, well, you are known well enough, and what spirit you are of...." He meant Blasphemy, and called it so. (The marginal comment of the Fifth Monarchy pamphlet notes: "Mr. Rogers, amazed at such language, again lifted up his hand and eyes towards heaven, appealing to God to judge righteously.") But anger led only to abuse. "Yea, I say Blasphemy again, for all your lifting up of your eyes, and I tell you, yea, that in a good box of ointment a little thing—a dead fly—may spoil all, yea, a little fly."

Quickly recovering his composure Cromwell indulged in a revealing burst of sentimentalism, so often the refuge of troubled warriors and embittered comrades. "Well you know," he told Rogers, "that the time was there was no great difference betwixt you and me. I had you in my eye, and did think of you for employment (and preferment); you know it well enough." "True, my Lord; and then you could say to me you thought no man in England so fit, but since the case is altered indeed; but I pray consider who it is is changed...." Old rebels betray; young rebels sit in judgment. The pathos of the falling out of factions stains the history of all revolutionary movements.[6]

Cromwell was to lose one or two more rounds of the argument before proceeding ruthlessly to win the battle. "Look you to your conscience," was his disengaging cry, "and I will look to mine." It was a safe retreat, for his conscience[7] was proving impervious to all the considerations of logic, law, politics, and theology which the quick-witted dialecticians tried to insinuate.

[6] Of this meeting between John Rogers and Cromwell, Professor Wilbur Cortez Abbott—betraying the usual biographer's bias in favour of his heroic protagonist—remarks in his formidable Cromwell edition (vol. III, p. 607): "....and there ensued one of the longest, the most entertaining and illuminating conversations of which we have any record in this period, marred only by the fact that the greater part of the talking was done by the voluble and inconsecutive Rogers, perhaps the most notorious man of his time for excessive verbiage and irresponsible utterance."

This is unnecessarily pejorative. From Cromwell we have enough utterance; the historian should be grateful for the recorded volubility which illuminates so much of the utopian mind and revolutionary temperament. Professor Abbott's insensitivity on this score leads him, in my view, to a misjudgment of the real course of the contest between the brilliance of a dialectical dissenter and the stolidity of an impatient man of power. He is quite unconvincing when he writes: "...according to his custom, Cromwell was as eager to meet his opponents in the field of dialectical theology as on the field of battle, trusting, not without reason, on the skill he had developed through the years since his earliest experiences in Puritan conventicles, to confound them out of their own mouths and out of the Scripture in which he was no less gifted than they...."

[7] As Cromwell memorably put it, in 1655: "Is there not yet a strange itch upon the spirits of men? Nothing will satisfy them unless they can press their finger upon their brethren's conscience to pinch them there...."

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Rogers: "... as I said before, the privative or negative part of the Testimony you cannot bear."
Cromwell: "Pish! here is a great deal of positive and private to show you are a Scholar, and 'tis well known that you are. And where do you find that distinction?"
Rogers: "In logic."
Cromwell: "Ha!"

Legalistic Latin was even less agreeable than logic.

Rogers: "Those you call Fifth-Monarchy-Men are driven by your sword to love one another."
Cromwell: "Why, I tell you there be Anabaptists" (pointing at Mr. Kiffin) "and they would cut the throats of them that are not under their forms; so would the Presbyterians cut the throats of them that are not of their forms, and so would you Fifth-Monarchy-Men. It is fit to keep all these forms out of the Power."
Rogers: "Who made you, my Lord, a judge of our principles? You speak evil of you know not what. For that Fifth-Monarchy principle, as you call it, is of such a latitude as takes in all Saints, all such as are sanctified in Christ Jesus, without respect of what form or judgment he is. But *'Judicium sit secundum vim intellectualis luminis'*"—(He was interrupted).
Cromwell: "What do you tell us of your Latin?"
Rogers: "Why, my Lord, you are Chancellor of Oxford, and can you not bear that language?"

Whoever edited the transcript could not resist the temptation to add for marginal printing his own remark, "An Ignoramus...." Indeed, the cut and thrust of the colloquy comes with such speed and dramatic by-play that one is forcibly reminded how little the style of political dialectics must have changed over the centuries; and more poignantly, one is impressed with what intrepid *élan* and bravura a few political prisoners in every age have dared to hurl their peremptory challenge at the highest authorities.

At one turbulent point in the debate the Fifth Monarchists came as close to a confession of some ambivalent revolutionary commitment as they ever had the clarity, or courage, to do. The issue was first joined with the angry demand, "Then, my Lord, let us have Liberty of Conscience. Will you not give us so much liberty as the Parliament gave?" In his usual exculpatory manner of answering a question with a question, Cromwell countered: "I tell you there was never such Liberty of Conscience, no, never such liberty since the days of Antichrist as is now—for may not men preach and pray what they will? and have not men their liberty of all opinions?"[8] (Our marginalist added drily, "no wonder the Prisons are so full of precious saints.")

This could not but lead to the explosive problem of the limits of freedom and the rights of resistance. For, according to Rogers, if absolute power issued in slavery, then "it was no resisting of magistracy to side with just principles...." Cromwell evidently exploded. "And who? Hear me: who?—who, I say, hath broken that? Where is an arbitrary or absolute power? (nay, hear me): where is such a power?" Rogers' reply was pointed and specific enough.

> Is not the Long-sword such? By what law or power are we put into prison, my brother *Feake* above these twelve months, I above twenty-eight weeks, and several others of our brethren, and we know not for what to this day? which I say again is worse, yea worse than the Roman law. And is not this Arbitrary? And is not your power with the armies Absolute, to break up Parliaments and do what you will? But, if you please, let me instance in others. (But they would not suffer him.)

The interruption came from an Army officer in the Chamber (presumably Lieut.-Col. Worsley, of Cromwell's own regiment): "But I pray by what rule do you resist Powers set up of God?" It was too late in the day, indeed too late in the century, for such threadbare theology. "Sir, you are mistaken," Rogers replied, "we do not resist such as are set up of God, but we resist sin in all men...." Cromwell's colonel was to be pressed even harder by another intervention: "That gentleman asked by what rule we resist Powers. We desire, then, to be satisfied by what rule you resisted the King, and warred against him and his adherents, and destroyed the Government before, seeing they were accounted too a lawful authority...."

CROMWELL INSISTED on replying himself; it was conventional, lame, and almost irrelevant. The King's absolute power; the people's grievances; the defensive war—yes, but does not that which begins in justified rebellion end in permanent revolution? As the day follows the night, as the moon orbits the earth, new generations of men come to renew old and good causes. Rogers was quick to seize the opportunity for a mag-

[8] Not a few historians have tended to support Cromwell's claim. "It was true. Cromwell's was the most tolerant government which had existed in England since the reformation. In practice, he was more lenient than the laws, and more liberal indeed than most of his advisers." Charles Firth, *Oliver Cromwell* (1900), pp. 367–8.

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niloquent sermon, a flight of political rhetoric which carried him further than he had yet been prepared to go.

> Yea, my Lord... our controversy is decided, and this case is plain on our side, and seems so now more than ever; for do not the poor people of God feel a Prerogative Interest now Up? As the old Non-conformists, or the good old Puritans were persecuted, imprisoned, reproached, and denied protection from men, and therefore were forced to fly to God by faith and prayer and tears day and night, not ceasing till the Vial of Wrath was poured out upon the heads of the King and his Prelates; so I say the new Non-conformists are abused, disowned, and denied protection, persecuted, imprisoned, banished, and forced day and night (yea thousands of them in city and country) to their faith, tears, prayers, and appeals which are the "Bombarda Christianorum," and will prevail, as sure as God is in Heaven, to bring down the next hot, scorching Vial of His Wrath upon these new enemies and Persecutors....
>
> Now, my Lord, let the loud cries of the blood, shed against these things you have set up, be heard, and make restitution of that blood, those lives, tears, bowels, faith, prayer, limbs, and skulls of us and our relations left in the fields and laid out against this kind of Government, whether in Civil or Ecclesiastical; or else let us have what they were laid out for; otherwise we must and will, with the Lord's help, side with those just principles that have been so sealed to and owned by the Lord. And this will be a most apparent defensive war as ever was in the world....

He was, he concluded, ready for the call to side with just principles, "whether it be *'praedicando, precando*, or *proeliando,'* by preaching, praying, or fighting." There was an astonished question from one of Cromwell's men: "Said you not *'proeliando'*?" Rogers did not hesitate; he affirmed it. "For the case," he said, "was never so clear as now it is, in the state of the controversy." It was clearer and more fateful than he knew. The turn of the case not only sealed the doom of the Fifth Monarchists; in the long historical perspective, a premature revolutionary commitment served to end forever the fiery prospects of the apocalypse in England. For a brief historic moment the millenarians were in high and irresistible gear. There was no holding them back. What could prevail against the triumph of the Final Overturning? An unshakeable confidence, half zealotry and half dogmatics, prefigured all the supreme moral contempt which men of ideology would for centuries be able to muster against men of power.

"YOUR CONDITION is very desperate," Rogers had told Cromwell, "for the next Vial which is to be poured out is the scorching hot one.... And look to it, it is like to fall heavy upon your heads and those that are about you." And again,

> *Rogers:* "For the controversy is not now between man and man, one Government of the world and another Government of the world, or King and People, but it is now between Christ and you, my Lord, Christ's Government and yours; and which of these two are the higher Powers for us to side with and be obedient unto, judge ye.... For I beseech you, my Lord, to consider how near it is to the end of the Beast's dominion, the 42 months, and what time of day it is with us now." (But *Mr. Ro.* was interrupted.)
>
> *Cromwell:* "Talk not of that, for I must tell you plainly they are things I understand not."

And finally, as "the Great Man" was going out, scoffing at the liberty they would fight for, he was yet again reminded that he must be judged for the Day was near. The swords that were now drawn against them would be "cut in pieces." Doomsday was upon him, couldn't the Lord Protector sense it? This was too metaphysical and quite beyond him. And they had laughed.

Rebellion in Permanence

CROMWELL'S disquieted concern was for the precarious stability of a new and not quite legitimate régime which had gone through the period of "turnings and tossings" but had not yet had time for "healing and settling." As he told Parliament in 1654, there were "many honest people, whose hearts are sincere, and the evil that hath deceived them is the mistaken notion of the Fifth Monarchy." He conceded that it was "a thing pretending more spirituality than anything else...." But he could not overlook the grave challenge to state power implicit in their presumption that "they are the only men to rule kingdoms, govern nations, and give laws to people; to determine of property and liberty, and everything else...." How long could one risk tolerating the intolerable? "If these were but notions," Cromwell explains, "if I say they were but notions, they were to be let alone. Notions will hurt none but them that have them. But when they come to such practices... this is worthy every magistrate's con-

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sideration, especially where every stone is turned to bring confusion." How clear and present, then, was the danger? Cromwell was able to offer Parliament only an alarming picture of the hurly-burly:

> ...the nation rent and torn in spirit and principle from one end to another after this sort of manner I have now told you,—family against family, husband against wife, parents against children, and nothing in the hearts of men but overturning, overturning, overturning, a Scripture very much abused and applied to justify unpeaceable practices by all men of discontented spirits....

From Ireland, too, where his son had been sent to investigate the opposition to the Protectorate, the reports were dispiriting:

> I heare of some strange passages of your Anabaptists of Dublin to the greife and offence of lord Henry Cromwell.... There is a certaine generation amongst us are of a muddie and disturbed temper; and if they cannot get into government and greatnesse, as the Hebrews did into Canaan through Jordan, they will... attempt it by the way of Munster. Captain Vernon (the church's emissary) has ben abroade.... Confident I am, that somewhat is in agitation and secretly mannaged, which speakes it the more dangerous and to be reguarded.... What their consultations have ben is yet darke: however it concernes you to have a special care.... Remember Leyden. Though the same principle doe not allwaies produce the very same effect in circumstance, yet give it time, and but a conniving encouragement, and in substance it will.[9]

Two years after his first alarm Cromwell could almost speak of all this in the past tense: "how the Fifth-Monarchy men and others did endeavour to roll us into blood...." The first round with the assassins had been won: "for they must cut throats beyond human consideration before they had been able to effect their design." But now there were apparent regroupings, the Levellers with the Commonwealth men, the Baptists with the Fifth Monarchists, and always the hidden Cavalier (and Papist) hand fomenting new discontentments. He enjoined Parliament "to see and discern that which is obvious," namely, that "we shall sink and the house will fall about our ears upon such sordid attempts as these are."

WHAT THE TRIUMPHANT REBEL had to deal with was the spirit of rebellion in permanence. Every revolution produces a faction which cries out for its further and even continuous extension: a truer and deeper fulfilment always awaits. As one of John Milton's political critics wrote (somewhat unjustly so far as the actual politics of Cromwell's Secretary was concerned), "a Commonwealth is like a great Top, that must be kept up by being whipped round, and held in perpetual Circulation, for if you discontinue the Rotation, and suffer the Senate to settle, and stand still, down it falls immediately...." But how, then, to stop the spin? Marchamont Nedham—who was a friend of Milton, from whom he had received his weekly editor's licence, and who was often taken to be the author of Nedham's leading articles—sensed this danger to the "new Establishment" most acutely in the following argument. (It is a striking adumbration of the challenge of permanent revolution some three centuries before the theoretical formulations of the idea by Parvus and Trotsky, not to mention the restless cultural conception of Chairman Mao.)

> ...it were a thing to be wished, that Popular Consent might alwaies, and at all times, have the sole influence in the Institution of Governments; but when an Establishment is once procured, after the many shakings and rents of civil Divisions, and Contestings for Liberty, as here now in England, doubtless we have the greater reason to value it, being purchased at the price of our bloud, out of the claws of Tyranny; and we conceive it highly concerns us, to put in some pure *Proviso*, to prevent a razing of those Foundations of Freedom that have been but newly laid; especially in such an Age as this, wherein men are very apt to be rooting and striking at Fundamentals, and to be running out of one Form into another.... Which being considered, it was high time, some Power should pass a Decree upon the wavering humours of the People, and say to this Nation, as the Almighty himself said to the unruly Sea: *Here shall be thy Bounds, hitherto shalt thou come, and no further....*

Unless, he says, "unless we would alwaies be altering and shifting of Settlements, and so live for ever in Distraction." This stabilisation of the new Establishment of the People's Liberties through, namely, the defence of the rule of law, was "the only course to keep up wandring any

[9] 4 Sept. 1654 and 17 Sept. 1656, *Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (ed. Stainer, 1901), pp. 127–46, 211–55. Louise Fargo Brown, *The Political Activities of the Baptists and Fifth Monarchy Men in England during the Interregnum* (1912), pp. 154–5.

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more in the maze of our own Contentions. . . ."[10]

In a similar spirit, but with rather sterner practical consequences, the Lord Protector himself avowed that there was "a generation of men in this nation that cry up nothing but righteousness, and justice, and liberty." For some, with their "poor and low conceits," he had simple contempt. The notions of the Fifth-Monarchy men he preferred to think of as "more seraphical."[11] But even their "very seraphical notions," once allied to other forces of subversion, could only "end in blood and confusion." Indeed, the Warrant that was issued for the arrest and imprisonment in the Tower of John Rogers and others charged them with "attempting to disaffect and exasperate the hearts and spirits of the people, so that thereby they might bring the nation again into blood."

THE BEST GENERAL FORMULA for protection Cromwell could devise was "doing all things that ought to be done in order to reformation." But it had to be "a true reformation." There was so much that had to be improved. "I would say in my very conscience, and as before Almighty God I speak it, I think your reformation, if it be honest, and thorough, and just, it will be your best security." More specifically, there would be a new programme of vigilance on behalf of the public safety, and he called it "a little inspection upon the people." According to the published instructions to the Major-Generals who were each to command a Commonwealth district,

> They are to endeavour the suppressing of all Tumults, Insurrections, Rebellion, as also Invasion. . . . They are to see that all Papists are disarmed; they are to make highways and roads safe for travellers. . . . They are to have a strict eye upon the Conservation and Carriage of all Disaffected persons within the several Counties. . . . as also that no Horse-races, Cock-fightings, Bear-baitings, Stage-plays, or any unlawful Assemblies be permitted within their Counties. Forasmuch as Treason and Rebellion is usually hatched and contrived against the State upon such occasions, and much Evil and Wickedness committed.

Would this put an end to the troubles which began with *Agitators* and *Reformadoes*?[12] How much faith did the Lord Protector put into his little schemes of political and spiritual repression? "The mind is the man," he had declared in his impressive opening speech to Parliament in September 1656: "If that be kept pure, a man signifies somewhat; if not, I would very fain see what difference there is betwixt him and a beast. He hath only some activity to do some more mischief. . . ."

But weren't the Saints being beastly, or at least mischievous, when from a dozen pulpits and pamphlets they were shouting at him that the handwriting was on the wall and that it augured the end of "wounds and woe. . anguish, tribulation . . . sighing, sobbing, weeping, wailing, crying, imprisoning, hanging, murthering. . ."? Things were going too far when "laws are to be abrogated, indeed subverted." When his patience was exhausted, and he sensed that the "pulling down of Babylon" and the "burning of the whore's flesh with fire" had now become signals for the onset of force and insurrection, most of the Fifth Monarchist leaders were hunted down and kept under arrest.

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[10] *The Censure of the Rota upon Mr. Milton's Book* (1660), p. 15. Marchamont Nedham, *A True State of the Case of the Commonwealth* (1654), p. 34. I should mention that Milton's Rota critic associated him—as have many modern Milton scholars—with the radical saints, "the Fifth-Monarchy-Men, who would have been admirable for your Purpose, if they had but dreamed of a fifth free-State. . . ." But Milton himself, fairly loyal Cromwellian that he was, was clearly out of sympathy with the fanatically radical sects, perhaps most angrily so when he wrote against those

> *That bawle for freedom in their senseless mood,*
> *And still revolt when truth would set them free.*
> *License they mean when they cry libertie. . . .*

[11] "*Seraphic, seraphical* . . . allusively applied in the sense of zealot . . . rapturous, ecstatically devout. . . . In the 17th c. often ironical, applied to fanatical religionists or to impassioned orators. . . ." *Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. IX (1933), pp. 489–90.

[12] When the New Model Army was established in 1645, the disbanded soldiers (they became a political problem) were referred to as *"Reformadoes."* The chosen representatives of the various regiments were known as "*Agitators*" (often misspelt and held to be a form of "Adjutators"), or official military agents: *agitate*, to do the actual work of, to manage. That it had a subversive connotation is clear from Marchamont Nedham's little playlet, *The Levellers levelled* (1647), in which the main persons are "Five Ajutators, or Levellers," namely, "Apostasie, Conspiracie, Treacherie, Democracie, Impietie." But its consistent modern usage dates apparently only from the time of Burke a century later. See *Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. I (1933), p. 184; S. R. Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War* (1891), vol. III, p. 60; and *Speeches of Cromwell*, pp. 6–9, 412–13.

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The Dust-bin of History

THE SAINTS remained impenitent. The system of oppression had to be totally overturned, and for that "smiting work" there was no way for a soul to appear except in "a military posture." Cromwell had disdained to convoke a "Jewish Sanhedrin" or Parliament of Saints, and the so-called Barebones Parliament was short-lived. Fifth Monarchist spokesmen were soon reviling the newly proclaimed Lord Protector as the "dissemblingst perjured villaine in the whole world." The beast with all its horns would be destroyed; the millennium was coming. Scriptural arithmetic calculated the end of the beast's reign some 1,260 years after the death of paganism in 396 A.D. Suffering saints became fighting saints and their "quiet dreams" gave way to desperate schemes for armed revolt. As chaplain Sedgwick tried to remind General Fairfax (who had taken the surrender of the King's forces at Oxford in June 1646), "You must remember my sermon to you at Windsor . . . Overturn, overturn, overturn; 'tis Scripture still, and that word [*Ezekiel* 21:27] lives in and upon you."

Having adapted texts and revised doctrines in order to prophesy with apocalyptic and strictly mathematical certainty that their rule was imminent, the saints were growing wildly impatient. As chaplain Erbury wrote, "The best of us fancy a reign of Christ for a thousand years, and the Saints to reign with him." They would try, if in vain (for they were incapable of making allies of the popular forces), to follow chaplain Dell's preaching that "the power is in you the people; keep it, part not with it." They were convinced of the argument (even if John Lilburne and his Levellers had some political differences with it) put in a sermon by chaplain Peters: "Yee talk of Laws, Laws; the Kingdom is not to be maintained by Lawes, but by perfect men." And this was clearly enough understood by a hostile pamphleteer who wrote in his *Confusion Confounded* (1654): "the Statute Book (the long experience and caution of our wise ancestors) shall be thrown out of doors, and men shall come into a Senate to consult of Politick Emergencies with Bibles in their hands. . . ."[13]

[13] Leo F. Solt, *Saints in Arms: Puritanism and Democracy in Cromwell's Army* (1959); and "The Fifth Monarchy Men: Politics and the Millennium," *Church History* (Sept. 1961), vol. 30, pp. 314–24.

WHAT COULD BE WORSE than this time and this place? "We are under," Rogers wrote, "as barbarous a spirit of the Beast as at this day exercised in any part of the world, and as miserable a servitude as among the Turks . . . ." Although the provocation was great, he warned "not to stir untimely . . . to some rising or action of defence"; he called for unity among Fifth Monarchists and Commonwealth-Men "which may easily be obtained, and then, March, for the signs are upon us, and the trumpets sound, Horse, horse, and away!" Was this the signal to revolt? Not quite.

> Yea they pretend plots, and do this lest there should be any rising, when indeed by their insupportable oppressions, persecutions, and provocations, they do all they can to stir us up, whether we will or no, unto it, for the necessary preservation of our lives, liberties, relations, religion, and consciences, from their so monstrous inhumanity and persecution in hypocrisy.

But if not now, when? Rogers himself had been in the "old Butcher's shop and shambles of the Saints," where Wycliffe's chains were still on the walls, where martyrs like Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer had suffered; he too, like his brethren, had "passed through prisons, reproaches, tumults, beatings and buffetings often, throwings headlong, banishment and spitting upon, yea spoiling of my goods . . . and in plunderings often, and in perils of life, sickness, fevers, storms, cold, snow, and tempests, without bed, without bread, in sore travels and several other trials. . . ." And he dared (thinking of his gaoler Maj. Bull) to cite *Jer.* 1.27: "Slay all their Bulls, let them go down to the slaughter. . . ." He would even venture "'a little further"—

> From what I foresee and may easily gather, I dare affirm. . . . That either extraordinary sufferings or extraordinary actings, in either of which we must carry our lives in our hands to offer up, are at the door of England. But the last rather I look for.

Was this only a forecast? Scarcely. "Awake, awake, yea rouse up, O Saints," Rogers called, "and shake yourselves from your prison dust . . . for it is high time; yea, the time is now come to start up like Lions (too stout for sufferings as before). . . . Appoint the day, appropriate the duty, and to it. Yea, do it with such a shout too as may make the ears of the enemies ring; yea, begin the earthquake, and rend up

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by the very roots the foundations . . . yea, till there be such a trembling, shaking, and consternation, yea, a μετάθεσις, translation, overturning, and total amotion of them, that the Beast's government may never have a being more in England. . . . But our Cause cannot miscarry, my friends; it cannot fail us, who are heirs of the promise. . . ."

The great transformation would mean also a very special personal release. ". . . for I tell thee through thy cruelty I am set upon a Mount so high, as I see thee and all the Kings of the Earth to boot, as proud as they be . . . but like ants about a molehill, which I laugh at when I see them most busy about their nests, which in one crush will be destroyed, kicked down, and dispersed like the dust on the floor. . . ."[14] The history of revolutions appears to circle around a gaping and omnivorous dust-bin.

The Great Chain of Human Hope

THE GOOD OLD CAUSE had been betrayed. The Fifth Monarchists were now "thoroughly convinced of the Apostacy, Hypocrisie, Murders and Treason of Oliver Cromwell"; and when "our principle to the world" was published it was to establish "a Standard for all. . . that hunger after the Truth, that wait for Justice and Righteousnesse. . . ." In 1657, when we find Rogers in outrage against "the present Wickednesses, Hypocrisies, Blasphemies, Persecutions and Cruelties of the Serpent Power," one diarist referred to the Fifth Monarchy men as "Enthusiasts & desperate Zealots, pretending to set up the Kingdome of Christ with the Sword: to this passe was this age arrvd. . . ." Another chronicler, fearing a turn to the "fire and sword," confessed that "we daily expect a massacre"; and from Blackfriars a visitor wrote, "I heard one prayer and two sermons; but good God! what cruel, and abominable, and most horrid trumpets of fire, murther and flame." But one report to the government observed more generously,

> Men variously impoverished by the long troubles, full of discontents, and tired by long expectation of amendment must needs have great propensions to hearken to those that proclaim times of refreshing—a golden age—at hand.[15]

The first of Thomas Venner's two attempts at insurrection occurred in the year 1657 which one of the Fifth Monarchist pamphleteers (prefaced by Rogers and Feake) had called *The Time of the End*. It was supported mainly by the lower ranks of the movement; apparently General Harrison, Rogers, and others of the leadership withheld their approval, doubting whether the exactly and properly calculated time (two and forty months after the reign of the Beast) had yet come. The police were too well informed, and the uprising was frustrated by the capture of the conspirators' "pistols and holsters, powder, shot, and match proportionable. . . ." There had only been a small nucleus of armed men on horse and on foot: the plan had been to disarm by surprise isolated regular detachments, to swell their own ranks by welcoming common soldiers from the opposing forces, and to fill the military chest with spoils (to help pay wages and relieve families). All was in readiness: the bundles of manifestos for distribution, the taffeta standard bearing the red lion of the Tribe of Judah (with the words: *"Who shall rouse him up?"*). But it was not to be. They were trapped in their Shoreditch headquarters, "armed, booted, and spurred," and their cache in Swan Alley was confiscated.

Venner (a wine-cooper who had re-emigrated from New England) had courage enough to try again in 1661, and this time his men, as was reported, "fought with an incredible impulse of infatuation, as making themselves to believe that one should chase a thousand and no weapon formed against them should prosper." But how far could even the most indestructible faith of a handful of fifty or so saints move the events of the day? This is Pepys' diary entry for 9 January 1661:

> Waked up in the morning about six o'clock, by people running up and down in Mr. Davis's house, talking that the Fanatiques were up in armes in the City. And so I rose and went forth; where in the street I found everybody in armes at the doors. So I returned (though with no good courage at all, but that I might not seem to be afeared), and got my sword and pistol, which, however, I had no powder to charge; and went to the door, where I found Sir R. Ford, and with him I walked up and down as far as the Exchange, and there I left him. In our way, the streets full of train-bands, and great stories. What mischief these rogues have done! And I think near a dozen had been killed this morning on

[14] *Jegar-Sahadutha* (1657), in Rogers, *Fifth-Monarchy-Man*, pp. 225–304.

[15] *The Diary of John Evelyn* (ed. de Beer, 1955), vol. III (6 Aug. 1657), p. 196; P. G. Rogers, *Fifth Monarchy Men*, p. 97; Brown, *Political Activities*, p. 27n; Solt, *Church History*, p. 321.

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both sides.... The shops shut, and all things in trouble.[16]

Most of the insurgents were trapped between Highgate and Hampstead. They had all fought, as one record of the defeat observes, "with a courage more brutish and devilish than was ever seen in men, and if their numbers had been equal to their spirits they would have overturned the city, and the nation, and the world...."

The leadership of the Fifth Monarchy movement was decimated. Sir Henry Vane and John Carew were executed; John Rogers (now 33) fled to Holland. In October Major-General Thomas Harrison had been hanged, drawn, and quartered; and now, in January, the heads of Venner and Hodgkin were put on top of poles on London Bridge. When General Harrison was being taken to the gallows at Charing Cross, someone shouted, "And now—where is your good old cause?" He replied, pointing to his breast, "Here it is! And I am going to seal it with my blood...."

THE SEAL WAS SET upon a heavenly ideal "here on earth." A devout commitment to "a well-ordered Commonwealth, ruled by the best of men, of sound principles, of known integrity" had called for revolutionary action "to take off all yoaks and oppressions both of a civil and spiritual nature from the necks of the poor people." The audacity may have been premature, but for those who would follow there would always remain (in the titular phrase of the Fifth Monarchy programme) *A Door of Hope*. How could they, the fighting and suffering saints, ever doubt that there would be reward and recognition for their steadfastness? "We in our preachings and writings may to the present age seem audacious men, thus to meddle with dark prophecies, yet the succeeding generations shall bless the Lord for raising up some before their times." The confidence in the future of a meddling prophetic darkness was to prove to be misplaced; but if "their times" were never to come, their audacity was to be an eternal temptation. Even for historians. Of two 20th-century students of the Fifth Monarchists,[17] one has contended: "The slow pragmatic process of change is more in accordance with the English national temperament than a sudden transformation imposed by force." The other, however, has written: "They held an ideal which for purity and splendour is, when compared with those for which our generation gives its strength, as a Matterhorn among molehills! ..."

Thunder and lightning . . . overturning days . . . teetering and tumbling affairs . . . blood will have blood . . . doomes-day drawing nigh . . . the rule of the just . . . a true reformation . . . audacious men and dark prophecies . . . words are actions . . . the minds of men . . . the holy destruction of the evil of oppression and injustice . . . the golden age is at hand . . . the fire and the sword . . . . For three centuries these accents, with a few historic variations, would remain the basic elements in the world of the radical temper. They are the constant links in the great chain of human hope. A modern cycle of revolution would begin with its saints and would end with its scientists. But there is a meeting point—and it is, as we shall see again and again,[18] an emotive as well as a semantic convergence—between the new radical who would dream of secular solutions in terms of religious forms or phrases and the old rebel who envisioned an eschatological end to his this-worldly struggle for the good cause. One man's metaphor was always another man's reality.

[16] Samuel Pepys, *Diary* (ed. Wheatley, 1907), vol. 1, p. 298; Rogers, *Fifth-Monarchy-Man*, pp. 327-8.

[17] P. G. Rogers, *Fifth Monarchy Men*, pp. 155-6.

[18] "The number of possible political ideas is very limited and, once they have been adumbrated, the greatest political philosopher can only make new permutations and combinations." Christopher Morris, *Political Thought in England: Tyndale to Hooker* (1953), p. 151.

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Interview with

André Malraux

YOU ARE THE AUTHOR *of celebrated books on revolution and revolutionaries, you fought on the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War, worked for the revolution in China, and were close to Communism. But now you have been a Minister of de Gaulle's for ten years. Have you broken with your past? Have you become a conservative?*

MALRAUX: If I had remained loyal to what you call my revolutionary past, what should I have done? To us the revolutionary past was the link with the Soviet Union. What, then, would I have been doing?—signing protests. But as a Minister I have proclaimed the independence of four African states. As a Minister I was nearly murdered during the Algerian War (the poor little girl who happened to be in my place was blinded). So I have signed no protests, but taken blows instead. Also I feel I have faced far greater risks than those who presume to pass judgment on me, who in general have done no more than turn their easy chairs in the direction from which the wind of history was blowing.

—The fact remains that there is a difference between Malraux the revolutionary and Malraux the Gaullist Minister.

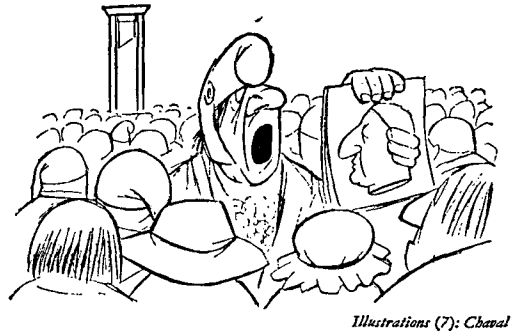
MALRAUX: There is some truth in that—there is a gap between my present views and the ideas of my youth. I think that is partly attributable to external events of profound historical importance. What was the content of our life in 1934 and thereabouts? The fact that we were anti-Fascist and on the side of the Soviet Union. I am referring of course to the time before the Moscow trials. We were by no means certain that a war between Hitler and the Soviet Union would end with victory for the latter. The situation has changed. In the resistance to Nazism I identified myself with the cause of France. Thus in the last resort those who attack me because I no longer regard the proletariat as the supreme cause to be served are right. I have replaced the proletariat by France.

—But what is France? A country with a very marked class society, in which severe clashes between the classes take place from time to time.

MALRAUX: That is correct. But today I believe the nation to be more important than the class struggle. In France we have 7,500,000 workers —7,500,000 working-class voters—out of a total of nearly 30 million voters. In other words, reality is by no means Marxist. The workers no longer constitute a majority, and consequently a totally false idea of such a majority will lead us nowhere.

—Nevertheless the French working class made a dramatic appearance on the scene in the great strikes of May 1968.

MALRAUX: Yes, but in my opinion the essential point lies elsewhere. In the nineteenth century, whether you take Victor Hugo or Karl Marx, the idea prevailed that the twentieth century would be internationalist. But the facts show us that it was not the Marxist theory but Nietzsche who was right—when he said that the twentieth century would be the century of national wars. In fact today we are confronted with a tremendous phenomenon: the birth or rebirth of nations all over the world. But the nations that are arising are not the nations in their previous form. Mao Tse-tung, for instance, is creating a China that is fundamentally national. It is not the China of the Emperors. If I now speak of France, for me there is nothing in common between the France for which I stand and the hegemonial France of the nineteenth century.



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—Isn't that a dangerous idea? When General de Gaulle made his triumphal journey through Germany in 1962 he praised the national traditions of the Germans. Do you approve of that?

MALRAUX: I shall not discuss de Gaulle's speech; I do not have the text in front of me. On the point at issue, the question to be asked is whether Germany is a country in which the idea of the nation seems to be specially dangerous, as, incidentally, it is in all former Fascist countries. The answer is yes. It is harder in Germany than in France to control the national idea. In my view, the problem that faces the German intellectuals is that of how a German nation is to be created that is not the Hitlerian nation. If they are not prepared to tackle this problem, they are cutting themselves off from historical development.

My relations with German culture are extraordinarily deep, especially in music and philosophy. Nietzsche's ideas mean a great deal to me. The misunderstanding of Nietzsche during the Hitler period, the false and misleading interpretation of the "will to power," must not be repeated. I believe Nietzsche to be the greatest irrationalist of the nineteenth century and one of the greatest prophets. As for music, when I received the German President at Fontainebleau, I told him this story. We were lying side by side in hospital, French and German wounded together. Suddenly Beethoven's Fifth Symphony began on the wireless, and the babble of voices died away. There were no more nations or fatherlands.

—Then are nations such tremendous things, if even symphonies can get the better of them?

MALRAUX: What concerns me is the perception that our civilisation is in the process of discovering both the political significance of the phenomenon of the nation and the indestructible significance of the all-embracing phenomenon of culture. What is taking place in the field of culture throughout the world is different from what is taking place in the political field. The nineteenth century believed that it was a uniform phenomenon, but that is absolutely wrong. In the sixteenth century, for instance, the great religions, in spite of their aspiration to be universal, assumed national forms. Nearly all my intellectual friends think in 19th-century terms. I believe, however, that we are confronted with the greatest revolution history has known. The face of the world and its basic problems have been transformed in a single generation.

—But hasn't that happened before, for instance in the Renaissance?

MALRAUX: No, it has not happened before. It did not happen even in the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, which was spread over many generations and consequently no one lived through the whole process. But we have seen such a revolution in our own time. Thus it is essential to be aware of the problems that the new civilisation is creating, and we shall never solve them with 19th-century ideas.

—You have mentioned the Germans and Hitler. Do you regard Nazism as, so to speak, an accidental historical aberration, a disaster that might happen to any country? Or did it have specifically German causes? Do you think other nations might succumb to such a perversion?

MALRAUX: I have thought about that problem a great deal without coming to a conclusion. Other nations did not find themselves in the same situation; they were not defeated in the war; and also in other countries there were not six million unemployed as there were in Germany. Undoubtedly the rise of Nazism in Germany was facilitated by something that had hitherto been a quality and not a defect of the German people, namely its exceptional discipline. One cannot imagine a similar French Nazism, because the French, as you know, are anti-government on principle. The tremendous acceptance of the state is undoubtedly something very deeply German indeed.

—The French are anti-government, did you say?

MALRAUX: . . . which does not prevent them from voting for it.

—But in May this year the French rose against their government.

MALRAUX: Let us rather say a segment of the Parisians. . . .

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—Weren't you as a writer, the narrator of the existential adventure, the ex-revolutionary, affected by the revolutionary élan *of the students, especially in its surrealist forms in* "l'imagination au pouvoir"?

MALRAUX: The events of May must be regarded as the result of the interplay of two different processes, the student revolt and the general strike. Without this interplay it would not have developed into a revolutionary movement.

—But the interplay can hardly have been accidental.

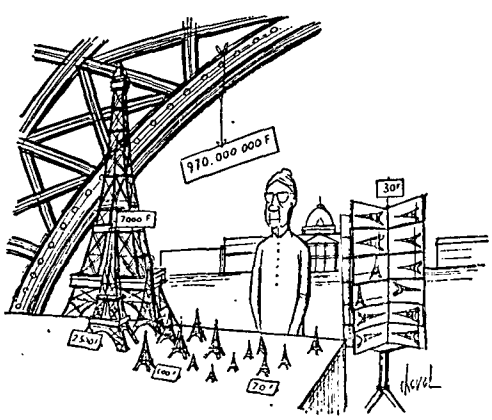
MALRAUX: We are coming to that. So far as the students are concerned, what you rightly call the surrealist aspect of the movement amused me greatly, but I did not take it seriously for a moment. You quoted the slogan *l'imagination au pouvoir*. But that is a joke. Are we, who know the meaning of political reality, to forget the lesson of the whole of our lives? Political power is gained, not by imagination, but by organised political forces.

—But surely the student attack on industrial society, on the consumer society, is also a reality?

MALRAUX: There is an explanation of that to which I attach enormous importance. We are the first civilisation not to be in harmony with itself. In earlier civilisations, apart perhaps from the three centuries of the Roman Empire, there was an identity between man and the cosmos, between man and God. In our civilisation, of which machines are the great symbols, something is happening that has never happened before. Man no longer has a meaning.

—Do you believe that the young are conscious of that phenomenon?

MALRAUX: We are confronted with young people who are not in harmony with the universe, and the more they acquire a minimum of knowledge, the more strongly do they become aware of it. That is why we must take the student movement very seriously. But let us not forget that there has always been a student movement everywhere, at all events for more than a century.



—You don't believe that co-operation between students and workers will be lasting?

MALRAUX: No.

—Then it was merely an accident?

MALRAUX: No, not an accident. I would rather say that proletarian youth saw itself faced with the same problems as the students. In politics one must not under-estimate what I should like to call "negative feelings." To a large extent we were anti-Nazi before we were pro-Soviet (and I never was that inordinately). Today, when a great many young people say they are opposed to the consumer society, they do not know what it means, but it is correct to say that they are against it.

—Do you regard that as a sincere and ethical critical attitude?

MALRAUX: In France we had the feeling that the whole thing was extraordinarily superficial. At the time of the May events I asked a diplomat in the German Embassy what he thought of what was going on. That was when things were at their worst, with seven million out on strike. "I lived through the Spartakist movement in Germany," he replied. "Do you expect me to take this seriously?" Before 1933 you could hardly enter a tavern in Germany without coming upon Nazis and Communists beating each other up. The same sort of things was happening between reactionaries and Communists in France. That was a conflict that affected everyone. But this time, during the May events in France, the conflict was limited to the demonstrators.

—And the police, who became so hated?

MALRAUX: What surprised me was that there was no hatred on either side, either among the Gaullists or among the others. There seems to be a distinction between the political and, let us say, the moral attitude. In contrast to when I was young, the intellectuals have accepted a kind of complete separation between their behaviour and their moral principles.

—In your time you went to Spain and fought for the Republicans. Today intellectuals sign protests against the American war in Viet Nam, but none of them go and fight for North Viet Nam. What's the explanation?

MALRAUX: Perhaps Viet Nam is a bad example, because it is a long way away. Let us rather

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take the Algerian war. There were no intellectuals who went and fought on the rebel side in Algeria either. This acceptance of a distinction between what one does and what one says is certainly an entirely new phenomenon. My British, American, and German friends at that time would have regarded such a distinction as unacceptable. When we signed protests, it meant that if war came we would fight against Hitler's troops. When I went to Germany with André Gide to submit our protest against the Dimitrov trial to Hitler, we did not consider much risk was involved, but there were not many who were willing to undertake such a mission to Germany at that time. Accidents can easily happen, as you know.

—But to you it was obvious that you must go?

MALRAUX: Yes. No doubt today things are different. One reason for that is certainly that intellectuals have become aware of the extraordinary power of mechanised civilisation and have the feeling that individual action, even in symbolic form, can no longer have any great significance. I take an entirely different view. In my opinion, if anyone had gone to Algeria to fight for the rebels, he would have done something of great symbolic value.

—What would General de Gaulle have said, M. le Ministre, if French intellectuals had fought on the Algerian side?

MALRAUX: I think that at all events he would have felt a certain respect for them. He would certainly have had greater sympathy with them than with the signatories of the Manifesto of the 121 French intellectuals who called on the troops to desert, knowing very well that the risk they themselves were running was nil.

—The Paris students did not shrink from risks. Their moral will expressed itself in barricades.

MALRAUX: But we all know, after all, that building a barricade is pure theatre. What are barricades, what are they for? They were an obstacle to prevent insurrectionists from being attacked by the royal cavalry. A moral problem arises when tanks can be dispatched.

—How is that?

MALRAUX: If the government had wished to eliminate the barricades by sending in, not the riot police, but tanks, it would all have been over very quickly.

—But by their barricades the students were only trying symbolically to say that there, in the Latin Quarter, they wanted to be masters in their own house. No one supposed the barricades could have stood up to a serious assault.

MALRAUX: But trying to say that by barricades was also a symbol, but a 19th-century symbol. A real revolution develops its own symbols. The October Revolution in Russia developed extraordinarily powerful symbols, but they were not those of the insurrection of 1905. I believe that the events of May in France were the end of a development, not the beginning, just as the October Revolution in Russia was the last great revolution in the 19th-century manner and not the first of the twentieth century.

—During the May unrest you were criticised, among other things, for having an excessively traditional idea of art and culture.

MALRAUX: As you know, my basic idea for cultural policy is the distinction between the knowledge transmitted by school and university and those phenomena that are not knowledge. To make myself clear, I should ask the question: Whose task is it to teach what one must know about Molière? The answer is the school and the university. Whose task is it to keep Molière alive and help to ensure that he is loved? The answer is the Comédie Française, the theatre. Napoleon understood that. But his three state theatres were sufficient for the Parisians of that time; in Napoleon's time all students could go to the theatre. But now....

—Now you would like to give as many people as possible the opportunity of loving Molière?

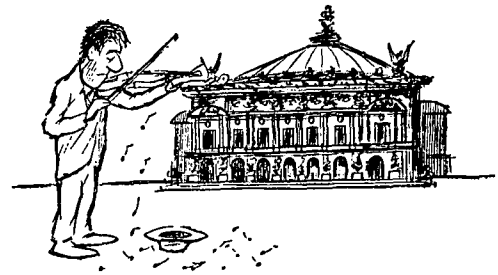
MALRAUX: I said in the National Assembly that the task of the schools and universities is to transmit knowledge, while ours is to awaken love for the objects of that knowledge.

—And you said that this mass culture should be free.

MALRAUX: Yes. Why should one know all about the life of Molière when one has never seen a performance of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*?

—So you regard as your chief task the establishment of cultural centres in provincial towns?

MALRAUX: Yes. We know that 3,000 workers go to the Maison de la Culture at Bourges. These are proletarian institutions, of course. They are like the Paris Métro, they are used by prole-



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tarians, white-collar workers, and many other people....

—The rich bourgeoisie....

MALRAUX: No, the cultural centres are not places at which one sees the rich. The real possessing class needs no cultural centres. But if you go to Bourges—where Marie Dorval, the greatest singer of her time, could not sing, because there was no audience for her—you will discover that the cultural centre there has 12,000 subscribers.

—What do you offer them?

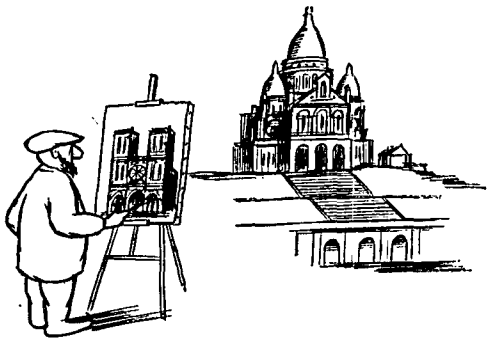
MALRAUX: The directors of some cultural institutes have put on exhibitions of abstract painting.

—How abstract?

MALRAUX: They have not gone further than Cubism, but that is a great deal, after all, for a town like Bourges. One of the directors wanted to put on a Braque exhibition. We'll see what comes of it, I said. The exhibition was a huge success.

—What strikes us about Malraux the Minister of Culture—and again it is a surprise in relation to Malraux the revolutionary writer—is a certain decorative-aestheticising trend in his art and cultural policy. You have had the architectural monuments of Paris cleaned and the Grand Trianon at Versailles completely restored. But such decorative acts of national face-lifting are completely contrary to the spirit of really modern, present-day art.

MALRAUX: I do not believe there is any conflict here. This is where the universal character of our culture arises. I have already told you how concerned I am with the fact that the problem of the nation presented itself to me so clearly just when I was grappling with the problem of culture as a universal phenomenon. Why is it a universal phenomenon? Because of the mass media. That is to say, we know music through discs, and painting and sculpture through reproduction, plaster casts and photographs, to an extent unparalleled in any earlier civilisation. This phenomenon, which I have described as *Le Musée imaginaire*, is absolutely unparalleled, and is possible only thanks to photography.



—You believe that buildings should be made the best of, cleaned?

MALRAUX: You can say if you like that there are aesthetic motives for what I am trying to do.

—The aesthetic theory you followed in the cleaning of the buildings of Paris was not uncontroversial. Why did you attach so much importance to the Louvre being bright yellow?

MALRAUX: I attached great importance to it, but it was merely incidental in that case. Why did I attach such great importance to it? It was argued, as you know, that the black layer on the stone of the buildings of Paris was patina. That is absolutely ridiculous. Stone in Paris does not acquire a black patina. You need only go to Versailles, and you will see for yourself at once. Stone in Paris acquires an orange patina. If it is black, it is simply because it is dirty, and for no other reason whatever.

—Should it therefore be cleaned at great expense?

MALRAUX: Black buildings permit no play of light and shade on the sculptures. By changing the colour of Paris I believe I have restored the city's gaiety. For this Paris architecture, which as a whole is not very old—it dates from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—was a gay architecture. The Place de la Concorde is the gayest product of French architecture. When it was black it was very gloomy, but now it has become gay again.

—Do you also regard that as incidental?

MALRAUX: It interests me to restore the light and shade of the great sculptors. But the essential point is, I think, that ultimately my supreme consideration is not artistic but metaphysical. It has been said that the machine is the antithesis of dreams. What we observe today, however, is that never before has a civilisation had at its disposal such powerful means for the dissemination of dreams, above all the film. Those with the biggest dream factories at their disposal are not saints, but men, who want to make money. Consequently what they tend to above all is something that the psycho-analyst would describe as the deepest of all human motives, *e.g.*, sex

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and violence. But experience teaches us that man's greatest protection against his instincts—to echo Freud—is what has survived. We are very well aware that we do not see a Greek statue as Pericles saw it. But things that have survived as works of the mind or works of art represent a kind of protection for humanity, the greatest protection that has ever existed, while for other civilisations the protection was religion.

—So you regard art as a higher form of aid to living?

MALRAUX: Scientific civilisation is not religious civilisation, and if a civilisation is not religious, it must find ways and means of protecting itself against itself.

—One step taken by Malraux the Minister has upset many admirers of Malraux the writer, namely the dismissal of Jean-Louis Barrault from the directorship of the Odéon.

MALRAUX: M. Jean-Louis Barrault told a foreign newspaper that the government had allowed the Théâtre de France to be stormed by a group of hippies in order to be able then to act repressively against them. Everyone knows that it was not the government, but the students who stormed and occupied the Odéon. Thus it was a deliberate slander, a shameful lie. Management of a state-subsidised theatre implies a sense of responsibility. Nobody is forced to become the director of such a theatre. The government therefore took the view that Barrault could not continue to be a director if he took such an attitude in public.

—You regret it?

MALRAUX: I regret it, because Barrault is a man of talent, but I completely agree with the government's attitude in the matter.

—Were you in agreement with Barrault's artistic approach?

MALRAUX: In general, I consider Barrault to be a great man of the theatre. It is difficult to manage a theatre like the Odéon. It is relatively easy to criticise this or that production, but on the whole his work was remarkable.

—We put this question because it has been said that aesthetic differences played a part in your decision.

MALRAUX: You know very well that I appointed Barrault and continually defended him. I even did so in the National Assembly, when he put on Jean Genet's *The Screens* at the Odéon, which led to a great deal of criticism.

—M. le Ministre, does not Malraux the Minister sometimes look back with regret to his revolutionary past? Because he is no longer as free as when he went to Spain and China?

MALRAUX: But I have also been to China as a Minister of de Gaulle's, and believe I did a great deal of good there. There are some things that I have lost as a Minister, but others that I have gained.

—Do you mean your rencontres *with General de Gaulle? You once said that you considered him to be one of the great revolutionaries of our time. How is that to be understood?*

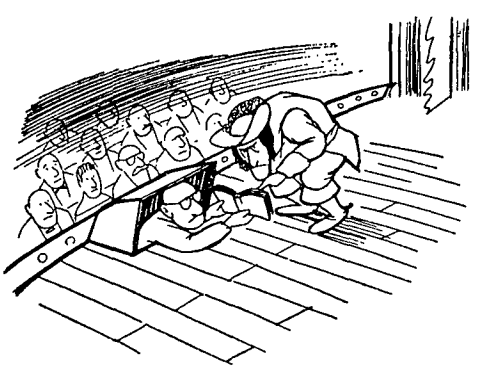
MALRAUX: When I said that I was thinking chiefly of Africa.

—Of de Gaulle as a decoloniser?

MALRAUX: As you know, it is now no longer a secret that there was dissension among the French Ministers at the time. But the former French colonies were given their independence under secure and viable conditions. So far as I myself was concerned, I felt strongly at the time that we were doing something of outstanding importance. You will note that the former French colonies in Africa are those in which the fewest tragedies have occurred. In our case there has been neither a Congo nor a Nigeria.

—What is your conception of a France without de Gaulle? Do you look forward to that prospect with dismay?

MALRAUX: The answer can only be a prophecy. Nehru told me he had no successor, and Mao told me almost the same thing. I think it lies in the nature of our times that a series of men who are no longer young should have come to the top. They represented a historical destiny, and these historical conditions in their totality will probably not recur. But at the same time it should not be overlooked that if at the time of Lenin's illness we had wondered who his successor was going to be, we should probably have



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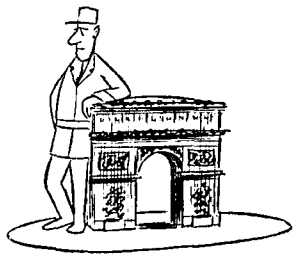
said Trotsky. Stalin's name would not have occurred to anyone. There is always the unpredictable.

—You have confidence—in spite of the events of May—in the institutions created by de Gaulle?

MALRAUX: The essential point in my opinion is that these institutions are more effective than those of the Fourth Republic, less for political than for historical reasons.

—You believe that historical greatness is not without consequences?

MALRAUX: I should like to repeat what I said in a speech about our new civilisation. If Napoleon met Rameses, he would find it very easy to talk to him, because their régimes were were not very different, their Ministers were more or less of the same type, and their problems were on the whole very similar. But if Napoleon met President Johnson, they would have nothing to say to each other. And, after all, Napoleon died not such a very long time ago....



The Walls of Logos

It is a kind of rapture just to see
The bobbing shuttles of the mind at speed,
But all is wasted if the work breaks free
From the loving discipline of need.
How can I teach myself what mind and heart
Must thread together thoughtless from the start?
How can I now be caught in that quick weave
That is so quick men watch it and believe?

The walls of Logos stand. All else is wrecked.
The criticism of the intellect
Is the empty shuttle going to and fro.
The only constancy is in the heart,
A home-made patchwork, proof against despair,
And the sad drab colours of each false start
Warm me to myself in the evening air;
Because these colours I have learnt to love,
Not for their shades, but for their being mine,
And for the careful way that fear and love
Have worked together in my strange design.

The walls of Logos stand. All else is wrecked.
The criticism of the intellect
Is unpicking the patchwork of my life.

Nicholas Snowden Willey

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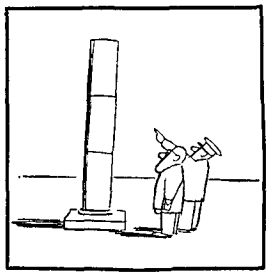

Column

NOBODY, I feel sure, would be so mad as to argue that relaxation of censorship is good for the arts. When we fight the censor it is in order to give the honest, second-rate writer a better chance of providing for his wife—to enable a man who has no imagination to market work that asks nothing of the imagination. I think this is fair enough. Moreover, a good writer only needs a vocabulary of about 500 innocent words to make a masterpiece. He can be left to make one. But a bad writer needs at least 5,000 to write something of no significance at all, and it is for him that we demand access to the four-letter word and what might be described as "liberty of the subject." That it is always the same subject is a most fortunate thing: bad writers are bad on any subject, so the fewer subjects they have the better.

The limerick, I believe, is the only art form to which the above truisms do not apply; it is the exception that shows the rule. So long as there is a censor the limerick must remain unprinted, and though sentimentalists approve of this—arguing that the limerick is our last link with word-of-mouth literature such as the madrigal, the Norse saga, the works of Homer—I have heard too many limericks ruined by boobies with no sense of rhyme or reason to come out in support of the censor. Nor is it any good arguing that anthologies of limericks can be privately printed in Amsterdam and Florence: such work is always done badly by printers who have no spoken tradition of the form and have never conceived of Young Ladies of Gloucester, Bicester, Chichester, Exeter, *etcetera*. Misprinted foreign publication was the trouble with all the early Bibles too, and it would be wilful to insist on repeating it.

The Authorised Version took at least a century to arrive. We have already waited nearly as long as that for the great *Oxford Book of English Limericks* that the O.U.P. will provide one day under the age-old sigil *Dominus Illuminatio Mea*. Meanwhile, W. S. Baring-Gould's *The Lure of the Limerick* can serve as an important stage on the way—a sort of "Breeches" Bible. May I say immediately that I dislike the title very much? It is "popular" and "catchy"; what was called in old censorship days "an offence against good taste." I hope that the blame rests on the publisher and not on the member of a family so closely associated with the Anglican Hymnal.

Mr. Baring-Gould's collection is broad in every sense of the word. Readers of previous collections found them bowdlerised so much that they put them down saying: "We have fished all day and caught nothing." Here, the opposite is true: Mr. Baring-Gould's problem has been how to winch aboard such a large catch of odd fish. Anthologies are usually compiled under what is called "author-headings," or, if they are nature anthologies, under such heads as "Spring," "Summer," "Autumn," "Winter." But most limericks are neither seasonal nor authorised. "Anon" has written nearly all of them. They are not affected by the weather. So how are they to be grouped?

Mr. Baring-Gould has put most of them in alphabetical order, choosing the initial letter of the defining word as the point of reference. This works well enough where the defining word is obvious—*e.g.*, the young man from *Australia* or the young lady named *Alice*, as only a fool would grope for these under a *dahlia* or a *chalice*. That the "A's" have it is also reasonable enough, I suppose, in the case of the classic *In the Garden of Eden lay Adam/ Complacently stroking his madam*. But why, then, put *In Paris some visitors go* under "G" when it cries for "P," or *In Summer he said she was fair* under "F": surely poor "F" is busy enough without having to be fair too? But on the whole the scheme works well enough, and almost any other—*e.g.*, a grouping under the main four-letter verbs—would lose in confusion what it gained in naturalness.

I SHALL WASTE NO TIME discussing the origin of the limerick because nobody agrees on what it is. The Irish claim is strong. The English claim is strong. There is even a French claim—a sort of squatter's rights, based on hazy medieval tenure. Mr. Baring-Gould, who has really gone as deeply into his subject as any of the Young Men in his collection have, discusses all the claims without prejudice or personal bigotry. His whole work, in fact, upholds the high tradition of friendly give-and-take that marks all the best writing on limericks but is found so rarely elsewhere. It is hard to maintain impartiality in a field that covers (as an American editor once noted) themes as personal and susceptible to whim as "Little Romances, Organs, Strange Intercourse, Oral Irregularity, Buggery, Abuses of the Clergy, Zoophily, Excrement, Gourmands, Virginity, Motherhood, Prostitution, Diseases, Losses, Sex Substitutes, Assorted Eccentricities, Weak Sisters, and Chamber of Horrors."

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At what point should one begin discussing an art form that is at least 150 years old and shows traces of pre-existence as far back as Aristophanes? Being a scholar, Mr. Baring-Gould backtracks as far as possible; but I would never do so myself. I would bypass any limerick that came earlier than *There was a Young Man of Cape Horn*. This, to my mind, has the two qualities that are essential to the establishing of a form, (*1*) rightness of tone, (*2*) a quality that can be equalled but not bettered. Written almost entirely in monosyllables, *Cape Horn* has also that plainness that is the stamp of all beginnings (*e.g.*, "Summer is icumen in"). Musset said of Molière that in our lush decadence we are always driven back to that pioneer playwright's lack of fuss and frills, his masculinity, his straightforwardness. I believe that the "Anon" of *Cape Horn* was the limerick's Molière. Like Norman Douglas, whose private life was always open to criticism, but never his aesthetics, I believe that everything about it testifies "to the genius of the unknown poet." I would also note in passing that Douglas' tribute was more than lip-service: his own *young fellow named Skinner/Who took a young lady to dinner* is an attempt to return to *Cape Horn*'s plain-sailing and fails only because the jocularity is too bumptious. *Skinner* is the "particular" gem; *Cape Horn is* the "universal."

Sophistication enters the picture at a very early stage of the limerick. What is basically a straightforward, or slightly curved, physical problem, usually with a sexual worry at the core, is very quickly made to happen, as D. H. Lawrence would say, only "in the mind." I find this even as early as *As Titian was mixing rose madder/His model reclined on a ladder*: one sees that the *tension* is the painter's, but the *figuration* is the poet's. The mind, of course, gets the upper hand entirely when the poet begins to explore *rhyme potential*, as I believe it is called. Swinburne (1837–1909) explored far too much in his well-known *Aberystwyth: get grist with/they pissed with* is a thoughtful man's struggle to make earthy and instinctual what is plainly only mental and philological. One must not get too pedantic, of course, about writers wanting to use their heads, but I would agree with Dr. Leavis that tradition suffers when *young Creole* runs with *I squeole, Delaney* with *nota bene, Mrs. Knollys* with *All Ksoullys*, and *in Antigua* with *what a pigua!* After a long bout of such ingeniousness, I am *amused*, but I am glad to get back to the world of my mother's knees in Arnold Bennett's *plumber of Leigh/Who was plumbing a maid by the sea*. But this may only be because I am older now. *Colchester* and *britches stir* seemed the queen of rhymes to me when I could see without spectacles.

It is interesting to think that Bennett, whose natural writing length was *The Old Wives' Tale*, should have mastered completely the shorter form about the tales of younger women. Or is it a fact that the long-winded are really at their best in the short stretch?—I have often suspected this. Certainly, discipline is the absolute essential of the limerick. Finding that third rhyme is what usually destroys "Anon's" self-control—and once that is destroyed one is pitchforked into the squalor, indecency, muck, coarseness, and loud screams for help that are the distinguishing mark of bad writing. It is then that the writer of the so-called "clean" limerick shows his superiority: he may be outside the "dirty" tradition demanded by the Leavisites, but he is the better man. If there *must* be a mind behind the limerick, let it be of *sound* mind. I would rather read the clean, off-beat limericks of a Father Knox or a Dean Inge than many a filthy bit of clumsy orthodoxy by "Anon."

Now, let us see what Mr. Baring-Gould has to show us. His Young Men include nearly all our old favourites: *Adam, Baker, Cyril, of Devizes, from Dunbar, Freud, of Ghent, of Hong Kong, of Jaipur, in Khartoum, named Lancelot, named McGill, from Natal, from Poughkeepsie, young Rev., curate of Salisbury, from Torquay, Mr. Uprightly, in Vermont, of Westphalia, named Xavier*, and so on to "Z." It is a huge list. As for the Young Ladies—can one even begin to list them, let alone describe their extraordinary charms, their whimsical inhibitions, their forthrightness, their endless misconceptions, their sudden changes of attitude, their ignorance, their desire for education, their love of convention, their unsuitable connections? I may be biased, but I believe that but for the Young Lady, there would be no limerick. The Young Man is expendable, when all's said and done; though usually the instrument and onlie begetter (as he can hardly fail to be), it is the Young Lady on whom we all rest in the end. Without her, we should not be set in motion at all; there would be no point to the wild exercises in which the Old and Young of the stouter sex engage so passionately. If we are to judge by the limerick—and I know no better authority—the human race has not a single male type or member who is not roused to frenzy by a Young Lady. Soldiers, sailors, solicitors, tea-planters, miners, engineers, elderly gentlemen, kings, Beys, bankers—they are one and all obsessed by a single object.

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Though money and security often matter to the Young Ladies, the gentlemen hardly ever give a thought to these, nor do they ever allow their business to interfere for a moment with their monomaniacal pursuit. The clergy are certainly the hottest of the lot; though often timid, as curates, they arrive at their bishoprics in the full maturity of dash and potency, and it is only the rare Young Lady who escapes the close attention of vicars, monks, abbots, monsignors, even hermits. I see no reason to question the voracity of this mass clerical appetite; it was believed in by Rabelais, who knew life as well as anyone. But it is the limerick that convinces us that religion and Young Ladies are not only fundamental inseparables, but the only things in life worth bothering with. I know of no other art form that states this creed so clearly, not even the sermon.

The Young Lady—*not* the Mother Goddess, be it observed—having this enormous significance, I was distressed to find certain prominent examples of her missing from this collection. *Brussels* is here (and more power to those *muscles*) but where is *Bruges*? And if *Bruges* is nowhere, must we also be given no *Ware*? *Mill Hill*, of course, depends on *the Pill*, and Mr. Baring-Gould had certainly gone to press before the Pope re-opened poor Pandora's box.

THE AMERICAN ENTRY is a strong one. Considering that the Americans must manage without many traditional values, and have no cathedral-cities of bad repute, it is a wonder that they have pushed the form so well. I note with interest that, as in matters of grammar, they are greater purists than the British. One of them even goes so far as to insist that every limerick should begin *in media res* and denounces the traditional opening *There was a young lady of* . . . as wasteful of space and almost monotonous. I think this is carrying Puritanism too far. The fact that all fairy-tales begin "Once upon a time" is no mere convention. It prepares the heart for what's coming. So does the Young Lady. But I sympathise with the American point of view because I, too, am a disciplinarian. I can see very well that a country that provides an unending string of tantalising place-names like *Nantucket, Natchez, Memphis, Utah, Des Moines, Terre Haute, Kalamazoo,* must take steps to see that dignity and precision do not degenerate into ribald mis-hits and implausible relationships.

The Anglo-American nature of the limerick has caused poaching on both sides of the water. I think it was wrong of the Americans to take *the young lady named Jane/Whose face was exceedingly plain*—a very great limerick indeed—and change her to *a young lady of Maine. Jane* and *plain* have gone together from time immemorial: it is only in recent years that the former has come to signify a roustabout's female knockabout. On the other hand, I am confident that the British *There was a young man of Belgrave/Who kept a dead whore in a cave* is a cheap theft from the Americans. There is no such place as "Belgrave," nor does the "cave" ever play a part in the native limerick—though the "sea," of course, is always close. No, I think the American start: *There was a young fellow named Dave* is the true one: it shows the whole of this limerick to be both trad. American in tone and plausible in the national context (*cf.* "Hill Billy").

THERE IS A CONTINUATION to this particular limerick and I am impressed to see that Mr. Baring-Gould has nabbed it: I had not known that it had managed to survive. Mr. Baring-Gould does not realise that it is a continuation and has printed it in another place, though one glance at the opening lines: *His sister, whose singular vice/Was to keep her dead husband on ice* might have told him that his sister could only be *Dave*'s. It is a good limerick with no falling-off at the end (*Cold comfort, but cheap at the price*) and I am proud to boast that I was one of the three people who heard it read aloud for the first time. This was in the offices of *The New Republic* (I mean the old offices, on East 49th Street). The time was that of Pearl Harbour. The author, who did not long survive the making of the work, was the magazine's film and jazz critic, Otis Ferguson.

Not only am I happy to bring a departed friend into the limelight; I am also conscious of the fact that such an action will soon become unnecessary. As the shadow of the censor recedes, "Anon" will recede as well. The authors of limericks will become as well-known as authors of other sorts, and more deservedly. We may never know the name of the faceless, fearless ur-Chichester who steered *Cape Horn* through the gales off Tierra del Fuego. We shall never know who, in the five lines of *In the Garden of Eden lay Adam*, said more about the rapture of Paradise than Milton was able to do in a whole Book. But from now on, we shall know such men—and our posterity shall know them too:

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments of princes . . . etc.

Nefastus Dies

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Ludwig Wittgenstein

By Stephen Toulmin

IT IS TWENTY-ONE YEARS this summer since Ludwig Wittgenstein gave his last lectures as Professor of Philosophy at Cambridge University. He died of cancer in April 1951—seventeen years ago. For those of us who still vividly recall the classes of his two final, post-war years, it is hard to come to terms with the bald arithmetical facts. Yet they cannot be denied; nor can their implications. However much we may thrust the truth from us, Wittgenstein is already an "historical figure," and is taking his place in that continuing rational debate by which the history of philosophy is kept alive. Even now, *Wittgensteinlehre* is threatening to become as much of an industry as *Kantlehre* was 150 years ago. So, disagreeable though it may be, it is probably time for us to face the task of locating Wittgenstein—both as a man, and as a philosopher—within the history of ideas: in the double hope of helping the inevitable discussion of his doctrines, and their implications, to get started from the right point of departure and of recognising for ourselves the newer lines of thought which—thanks to him—we shall be having to explore in the decades ahead.

Up to now, that task has scarcely been easy. No classic in philosophy is less self-explanatory than Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Even before publication, its basic intention was already being misunderstood. Bertrand Russell's long preface to the *Tractatus* was so gravely misleading that (as we now know) Wittgenstein thought seriously of making this an excuse for withdrawing the book from the publisher. Nevertheless, its immediate impact on philosophy was heavily influenced by Russell's interpretation, as taken up and developed by the positivists of the Vienna Circle, so that by the early 1930s Wittgenstein was disowning almost all its explicit teachings. Having once experienced the effects of disclosing his ideas prematurely, Wittgenstein never again during his lifetime allowed anything of his work to appear in print, on a scale to compare with the earlier book; while he had deep reservations even about the circulation of the typescript reports prepared by his students—and published recently as *The Blue and Brown Books*. As a result, until the appearance of his posthumous *Philosophical Investigations* in 1953, the content of his later teachings was known only on the basis of rumour and students' notes. Finally, his *Nachlass* passed into the hands of literary executors whose concern for their scholarly duties has resulted in his collected works appearing only one at a time, at considerable intervals: so much so, that others have begun to feel—perhaps unjustly—that the Wittgenstein they knew was being claimed as the intellectual property of a particular small group.

STILL: WITH THE PASSAGE of time all these obstacles are gradually becoming less formidable. By now, the authorised editions have covered enough ground for a consistent—if not a final—picture to be emerging.[1] Meanwhile, other editors have been issuing sets of notes reporting, in more or less direct speech, the content of Wittgenstein's conversations and classes at different stages of his career; though until now—with the publication of Friedrich Waismann's reports of conversations with Wittgenstein during the years 1929–32[2]—we have lacked anything about Wittgenstein to

[1] The most recent is Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, edited by G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, and published with an English translation by G. E. M. Anscombe *en face* (Basil Blackwell, 1967, 37s. 6d.).

[2] This highly-important collection is Friedrich Waismann, *Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis*, shorthand notes edited from Waismann's papers by B. F. McGuiness and published in German only (Blackwell, 1967, 45s.). A much slighter collection, dating from the last period of Wittgenstein's career, is L. Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*, edited by Cyril Barrett from notes taken by Y. Smithies, R. Rhees and J. Taylor (Blackwell, 1966, 12s. 6d.).

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compare in vividness and authenticity with Goethe's *Conversations with Eckermann* or Xenophon's *Memorabilia*. We possess, in addition, one of the notebooks Wittgenstein kept during the preparation of the *Tractatus*, though the rest were apparently destroyed. And now one further, invaluable document has appeared: a collection of 54 letters written by Wittgenstein to a man who was—as near as anyone could be—an intimate friend of his during the crucial years from 1916 to 1925. Along with these letters is printed a sensitive and revealing memoir by the recipient, a Viennese architect two years Wittgenstein's junior, who spent his last thirty years in Israel and died in Tel Aviv in 1965.[3] If the resulting slim book is read with the serious attention it warrants, this could do as much as anything else to put Wittgenstein's purposes and ideas back into their true perspective.

WITH ALL THESE fresh documents in hand, what kind of a picture can we piece together of Wittgenstein's place in early 20th-century European thought? That is what I shall attempt to show in this essay. And, just because the chances of Wittgenstein's friendships and career were a fertile source of gossip and misinterpretation, I shall proceed in two stages.

1. First, I shall work my way downwards through the superimposed strata of Wittgenstein's public reputation, peeling these successively away like the layers of Peer Gynt's onion, until we arrive at the core of his position—which, as Paul Engelmann makes clear for the first time, was the core both of his philosophical position and also of his personal attitudes. Just how closely these two aspects of Wittgenstein's thought were related had, I confess, eluded me until recently. In an earlier essay of mine, for instance, I find a statement—

> In recollection, the extraordinary personality of Wittgenstein the man too easily distracts attention from the pure-spring-water clarity and transparency of the truths of which he saw himself as the bearer.

—which fails to take into account the extent to which Wittgenstein's very personality was the expression of a highly articulated, though largely unverbalisable, personal point of view.

2. That done, I shall attempt to reconstruct the development of Wittgenstein's ideas: showing how, for him, each of the intellectual skins which in turn surrounded his central vision of life grew out of, and on to, the one immediately before. For the constellations of ideas characteristic of the different phases in his thought were all of them temporal cross-sections in the intellectual growth of a passionately single-minded thinker. So, in the long run, an account of all these *separate* phases can carry conviction only if it displays the relations between *successive* phases in a way that makes psychological—not to say, rational—sense.

In attempting this reconstruction (let me add) I shall also be embarking on an excursion into autobiography. Having spent the years 1946–47 as a research student at Cambridge, I went on a long visit to Oxford in the spring of 1948, and moved there at the end of the same year, taking up a University Lectureship in January 1949. The transition from Wittgenstein's Cambridge classes and "At Homes," to the style of philosophical disputations then current at Oxford, was a shock. For all its ingenuity and discrimination, the "linguistic analysis" of Oxford in the 1950s seemed—by comparison with Wittgenstein—to lack any philosophical mainspring: it was like a nursery clock-face, equipped with all the necessary hands and figures, except that one was free to move the hands around just as one pleased. There was at this time, of course, much talk about Wittgenstein and his ideas outside Cambridge, and his name became something for people to swear by (or swear at). But, to anyone who came straight from Wittgenstein's rooms at Trinity, both the Oxford philosophers who claimed him as a patron of linguistic philosophy and those opponents in London, like Karl Popper and Ernest Gellner, who belaboured him for trivialising philosophy seemed, equally, to be quarrelling over a lay figure. The real man, the real *philosopher*, had escaped them.

This deep sense that, ever since 1919, the name of Wittgenstein has been used more as a symbol, or trademark, than as the name of a genuine, individual philosopher—and human being—remains with me to this day. So, if only to repay a small part of my own intellectual debt to him, I shall try to do something here to redirect his readers' attention towards the deeper philosophical issues which (as I saw it in 1949, and still do) served as the continuing problems, themes, and sources of Wittgenstein's whole intellectual life and development.

LET ME BEGIN by stating and defending a series of negative theses. Public reputation has attributed to Wittgenstein half-a-dozen general doctrines, positions and philosophical attitudes which were not at all to his liking; and the first step towards recognising the true nature

[3] Paul Engelmann, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein, with a Memoir* (Blackwell, 1967, 25s.).

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of his philosophical quest is to see past these false attributions. To summarise:

1. Wittgenstein was never a positivist;
2. He was never deeply concerned with epistemology;
3. He was not a "linguistic philosopher";
4. There were not "two Wittgensteins," having different philosophical questions and concerns —the author of the *Tractatus*, and the author of the *Investigations*;
5. There were not even two distinct Wittgensteins —one the technical philosopher, the other the "thinker."

Of these misconceptions, the first four were always (in my view) the result of shallow and hasty reading. However, it was more pardonable to overlook the complete unity of Wittgenstein's thought, both philosophical and "ethical." During the 1940s, for example, Wittgenstein himself drew a fairly sharp line between the professional, conceptual questions he discussed in his formal seminars and the deeper, more personal topics he used to raise during his "At Homes." The connections between the two aspects of his thought are fully apparent only now, thanks to the letters and memoir of Paul Engelmann. These resolve some residual puzzles within his formal philosophical writings, and help one to understand his sympathy for men like Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and St. Augustine —a sympathy which would have been surprising in the anti-metaphysical, positivistic "Ludwig Wittgenstein" of popular reputation.

1. Wittgenstein was never a positivist.

During the 1920s, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* was taken up by the members of the Vienna Circle, and became one of the founding documents of the philosophical movement known first as a "logical positivism" and later as "logical empiricism." In his book *Consciousness and Society* (1959), H. Stuart Hughes has described the appeal of logical positivism to young Central European intellectuals growing up in the political and cultural wreckage of the Hapsburg Empire; and some 80% of the *Tractatus* could, without obvious misrepresentation, be used as a source of forthright, no-nonsense, positivist slogans. As these men read it, the book was a grand, highly professional and seemingly final denunciation of superstition (*Aberglaube*), and its closing motto

Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen

was inscribed on the banners of all high-minded young free-thinkers. True: the final pages of the book included some puzzling remarks about solipsism, transcendental values, and "the higher." But those were easily set aside as *obiter dicta*, having no organic connection with the central, uncompromising argument. Accordingly, the motto of the logical positivists ran: *"Absage an die Metaphysik!"* And, while one was engaged in sweeping the metaphysical rubbish out of the house, it seemed desirable to renounce *all* beliefs except those that could be meaningfully expressed in "fact-picturing propositions." Thus the road was opened which led from the *Tractatus*, through the views of the Vienna Circle, and onwards to A. J. Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic* (1936).

Once Wittgenstein had been labelled as a positivist, men found it hard to see him in any other light. So when, from 1929 on, he returned to philosophy and moved gradually into his second, contrasted phase of philosophising, his new style was not regarded as a *rejection* of positivism: rather, it was seen as a reconstruction of his earlier positivistic position on new and deeper foundations. Thus, in the late 1940s, Brian Farrell contributed an influential pair of articles to *Mind*, in which Wittgenstein's new position was characterised as "therapeutic positivism." Men were still (on this interpretation) to be talked out of superstitious, unverifiable and/or meaningless beliefs; but the arguments designed to produce this result were to have a new starting-point, and a new method. The idea that the realm of the significant could be demonstrated by an analysis of language in the symbolism of mathematical logic was now abandoned. Instead, philosophical theories were to be diagnosed as symptoms of misconceptions about our *everyday* language—"cerebroses" (so to say) comparable to the neuroses which spring from misconceptions about our affective relationships. They were accordingly to be "treated" by a philosophical therapy adapted to the specific intellectual cramps of the individual patient.

Now, THERE WAS INDEED an anti-metaphysical strand in all of Wittgenstein's work; but this was in no way associated with *positivism*. Wittgenstein's opposition to metaphysics (as we shall see) had a great deal in common with Schopenhauer's, and nothing at all with Comte's. For him, the word "metaphysics" was no blanket term of denunciation, to be used cavalierly to sweep aside whatever was not "meaningful," or "factually verifiable," as of no importance. Rather, he used the word in a highly specific sense—to designate the kind of philosophical discussion which "obliterates the distinction between [*i.e.*, confuses] factual and conceptual investigations" (*Zettel*, 458)—and his condemnation of metaphysics extended no further than this.

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Far from equating the important with the verifiable, and dismissing the unverifiable as "unimportant *because* unsayable," Wittgenstein took exactly the opposite stand. In the concluding section of the *Tractatus*, and repeatedly thereafter, he kept insisting—though to deaf ears—that *the unsayable alone has genuine value*. We can (he tells us) discover "the higher" only in that which the propositions of our language are *unfitted* to capture; since no "fact," such as can be "pictured" by a "proposition," has any intrinsic claim either on our moral submission, or on our aesthetic approval. So Wittgenstein's silence in the face of the "unutterable" was not a mocking, but a respectful silence. Having decided that only "value-neutral" facts can be expressed in regular propositional form, he exhorted his readers to turn their eyes away from factual propositions to the things of true value—which cannot be *gesagt* but only *gezeigt*. No wonder Wittgenstein himself saw the completion of his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* as a moment to give up doing philosophy, and set out to devote himself to more humanly important activities, such as school-teaching.

Paul Engelmann puts the point succinctly:

> A whole generation of disciples was able to take Wittgenstein for a positivist because he has something of enormous importance in common with the positivists: he draws the line between what we can speak about and what we must be silent about just as they do. The difference is only that they have nothing to be silent about. Positivism holds—and this is its essence—that what we can speak about is all that matters in life. *Whereas Wittgenstein passionately believes that all that really matters in human life is precisely what, in his view, we must be silent about.* When he nevertheless takes immense pains to delimit the unimportant, it is not the coastline of that island which he is bent on surveying with such meticulous accuracy, but the boundary of the ocean.

2. Wittgenstein was not concerned with epistemology.

How did the real point of the *Tractatus* come to be overlooked? Here Bertrand Russell's preface played an influential part. For Russell's whole anti-metaphysical progamme, dating back to his break with F. H. Bradley at the turn of the century, was indeed based on a positivistic desire to clear the nonsense out of philosophy—by sifting out, and restating in their true "logical forms," those beliefs which a rational man could regard as having a sound basis in "hard data." That had been the philosophical programme of his Lowell Lectures at Harvard University, published under the title, *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914). What Russell called "the scientific method in philosophy" led him to place credence, and value, only in those things which *could* be meaningfully expressed in a "logically well-formed" language; and it was pardonable if he failed to realise that the deeper philosophical motives of his young friend and pupil, Ludwig Wittgenstein, were quite the opposite of his own.

At any rate, both in Cambridge and in Vienna, the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* was initially read as elaborating the very same theory of "logical atomism" as had been stated in Russell's *Our Knowledge of the External World*. (Rudolf Carnap has told us that it took quite a number of conversations with Wittgenstein before the members of the Vienna Circle discovered that—after all—he was not "one of us.") Russell's preface also led to the *Tractatus* being read as a contribution to epistemology; and many of Wittgenstein's readers have looked for corresponding epistemological doctrines in his later work as well. Once again, however, we should pay more attention to the differences between Wittgenstein and those who claimed him as an ally than to their resemblances. True: the term "atomic facts," which plays a central role in the *Tractatus*, had been introduced in Russell's Harvard Lectures, in part, for epistemological purposes—to explain how (in Russell's view) propositions about "material objects" could be "logically constructed" out of propositions about immediate "sense-experience." So Wittgenstein acted imprudently when he analysed the logical relationships between "atomic facts" and the propositions that "mirror" them, without distinguishing his own "atomic facts" from the "hard data of sense" of Russell's epistemology.

The philosophers of the Vienna Circle immediately equated the two men's ideas, and treated them as a natural extension and clarification of the philosophical position earlier sketched in Ernst Mach's book, *The Analysis of Sensations* (1886). Thus, from the very beginning, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* was swept up into a debate about "how we know the external world," and about the relations between "sense-data" and "material objects." This done, it was not hard to read the *Philosophical Investigations* too in an epistemological sense. Epistemologists like Russell had treated Wittgenstein's "unit propositions" as units of *knowledge* as well as units of *language*; and there was therefore some justification for reading Wittgenstein's later polemic against the idea of a "private language" (whose terms would draw their meaning directly from "sensations") as an epistemological critique of the theory that "sense-data" are the foundation of all our knowledge.

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Nevertheless, Wittgenstein's preoccupation was in the beginning, and remained throughout, less with the foundations of *knowledge* than with the nature and limits of *language*. He was above all (as we shall see) a "transcendental" philosopher, whose central question could be posed in the Kantian form, "How is a meaningful language *possible at all*?" The arguments of his *Tractatus* acquired significance for epistemology only if viewed through the spectacles of Russell or Mach; for then—and only then—could Wittgenstein's problem about the limits of the "sayable" be seen as dovetailing with Russell's epistemological question, "Seeing how our language relates to the world, what foundation can we then find for our *knowledge* of that external world?"

3. Wittgenstein was not a "linguistic philosopher."

At first sight, this third thesis may appear to contradict what I have just said. One thing is certainly undeniable: throughout his career, Wittgenstein was concerned with language, and with the manner in which language operates within our lives. Yet he never saw language as the self-sufficient subject-matter of philosophy. The philosopher's task was not, in Wittgenstein's view, to instruct the ordinary man, by "analysing the meanings of words"—as he himself remarked, commenting on G. E. Moore, *"Was für eine höllische Idee!"* Nor was it a philosopher's business to classify the different ways of "doing things with words," by a kind of linguistic taxonomy. Though lexicography and linguistics were both perfectly reputable disciplines, neither of them was specially *philosophical*.

Wittgenstein was, thus, interested in language as an element in a larger inquiry. One might, like Carnap, build up an "ideal language" whose "logical syntax" could be formalised in mathematical symbolism; or work out schemes for classifying the different varieties of usages and "speech-acts," like J. L. Austin. But such linguistic investigations had implications for philosophy only when they were placed in a broader intellectual context. And, when we recognise the nature of Wittgenstein's deeper philosophical aims—to which his theories of language were subordinate—we shall find that he was no more of a "linguistic philosopher" than (say) Plato, or Kant, or Schopenhauer. Though all these men were interested in discovering how "thoughts" are related to "things," "language" to "facts," "judgments" to "things-in-themselves," or "representations" to "that-which-is-represented," none of them posed that question —any more than Wittgenstein did himself—merely as a problem in linguistics.

4. The Tractatus and the Investigations have the same subject-matter.

At first sight, two books could hardly be less alike than the *Tractatus* and the *Philosophical Investigations*. On the surface, the *Tractatus* is a contribution to symbolic logic, in the tradition of Wittgenstein's immediate philosophical teachers, Frege and Russell. By contrast, the *Investigations* presents an empirical-looking argument, designed to demonstrate the "prodigious diversity" of ways in which language is put to use in human life; and it continually seems to be verging, not into mathematical logic, but rather into anthropology and psychology. This surface contrast is, however, misleading. Waismann has recorded a conversation (*Über Dogmatismus*, 9 December 1931) in which Wittgenstein talked about his disillusionment with logical symbolism, as an instrument for explaining the significance and scope of actual linguistic behaviour. Seven months later (1 July 1932) he was telling Waismann:

> *Unklar im Tractat war mir die logische Analyse und die hinweisende Erklärung. Ich dachte damals dass es eine "Verbindung der Sprache mit der Wirklichkeit" gibt.*
>
> In the *Tractatus* I was unclear about "logical analysis" and the clarification it suggests. At that time I thought that it provided a "connexion between Language and Reality."

From these and other passages, we can now demonstrate how—despite the obvious differences between them—Wittgenstein could see his two books as successive attacks, using different methods, on one and the same group of problems.

The nature of those problems is best indicated by following up the analogies between Wittgenstein and Kant. For Immanuel Kant, the central tasks of philosophy were (*i*) exploring the scope—and the intrinsic limits—of the reason; and (*ii*) demonstrating the consequences of our irrepressible tendency to run up against, and attempt to overleap, those unavoidable limits. In this way, he hoped both to circumvent the epistemological quandaries in which his empiricist predecessors had been trapped, and also to avoid falling into the dogmatism of the rationalists. Kant, for his part, never explicitly presented his "transcendental" inquiries into the scope of "pure reason" as concerned with the nature of *language*. Yet, in some respects, they were always implicitly linguistic: his "necessary forms of judgment," for instance, were always specified by presenting the *grammatical* forms in which judgments could legitimately be expressed. This linguistic element in Kant's philosophy became more nearly explicit

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in his successor, Schopenhauer, who transformed Kant's two central questions about "pure reason" into questions about "representation." The scope and limits of the "reason" were, for Schopenhauer, the same as the scope and limits of "representation"; and the musician alone, freed from the restrictions of "representation," was able to convey directly those insights (or should one say "insounds"?) that words or pictures—being "representational"—could never capture.

THE IDEAS OF SCHOPENHAUER were profoundly influential in the circles within which Ludwig Wittgenstein grew up; and one can regard Wittgenstein's own philosophical preoccupations as carrying further the variations on Kant already initiated by Schopenhauer. As a result, Kant's philosophical tasks were restated yet again: (*i*) exploring the scope—and the intrinsic limits—of *language*; and (*ii*) demonstrating the consequences of our irrepressible tendency to run up against, and attempt to overleap, those unavoidable limits. In composing the *Tractatus*, indeed, Wittgenstein still thought of language in very much the same way as Schopenhauer—*i.e.*, as essentially "representational"—and he set out to analyse the resulting *Verbindung der Sprache mit der Wirklichkeit* in the new logical notation of Frege and Russell. Putting Schopenhauer's ideas on a formal basis: "unit propositions" represented "atomic facts," and the limits of the "sayable" were defined by exhausting the available "logical transformations" of these representations.

Later on, of course, Wittgenstein became convinced that the significance of ordinary, non-technical language could not, after all, be analysed in logical symbolism, and that some alternative way must be found to map the scope, and limits, of our language: the *Philosophical Investigations* was the result. But in this later book, as in the earlier one, Wittgenstein was still concerned with the "transcendental" tasks that he had inherited from Kant and Schopenhauer, even though he had now devised new methods for dealing with them.

5. *Wittgenstein the philosopher and Wittgenstein the "thinker" were one and the same.*

Throughout all his philosophical work, accordingly, Wittgenstein was attempting to delimit the scope of the "sayable"—exploring, in his own words, *die Grenze der Sprache*. And, just as Kant ended by recognising that the tendency of the reason to over-reach itself is a necessary and creative element in human thought, so too did Wittgenstein. Waismann reports a conversation at Moritz Schlick's house (30 December 1929) in which Wittgenstein brushed aside as over-intellectualistic the moral philosophy of G. E. Moore and his associates, and spoke with genuine respect of Heidegger:

> I can well understand what Heidegger means by *Sein* and *Angst*. Man has an impulse to run up against the boundaries of speech... which Kierkegaard himself already recognized and characterized very similarly (as running up against the paradoxical). This running-up against the boundaries of speech is *Ethics*.

The allusion to Kierkegaard is significant. For though, as a *philosopher*, Wittgenstein was concerned to delimit the boundaries of language—*i.e.*, of what could literally be "stated"—his deeper *ethical* reason for drawing this boundary was not to confine men inside it (*die Sprache ist ja kein Käfig*); but rather to show that all the really important issues—about God and freedom, value and immortality—overlap the boundary and lie very largely in the realm of the unsayable. (Rephrase the point in terms of "reason," rather than "language," and this conclusion is reminiscent of Kant's own view.) So, if men were to talk about ethics or theology at all, this must be done in something other than a literal, fact-picturing mode of discourse. Kierkegaard had referred to the language of religious expression as "indirect discourse." Wittgenstein speculated, at times, that it might have something of the character of poetry. But he was certain of only one thing—such matters could not be discussed in any species of language whose function was "representational."

As for most philosophical arguments about ethics and philosophical theology: these wandered unwittingly to and fro across *die Grenze der Sprache*, and were continually muddling factual questions with conceptual ones.

> I regard it as very important to put an end to all the twaddle about Ethics—whether it is a science, whether values exist, whether the good is definable etc. In ethics people are always trying to say something which the nature of things does not, and never will permit one to say.

A proper understanding of "representation" or "language" was the necessary preface if one was to come to terms with the intrinsic boundaries of articulatable human thought. Yet, since the exact location of these boundaries could be securely mapped only by moving outwards *from within* the region of the "representable" or "sayable," the task of delimiting them was a very delicate one. All one could hope to do was to show philosophers what risks they ran, if they insisted on using words in ways that disregarded their original significance, or if they

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attempted to capture, in literal or "representational" speech, the deepest ethical and religious issues that concern us as human beings.

SEEN IN THESE TERMS, the two sides of Wittgenstein's thought—philosophical and ethical—were evidently related. As a philosopher, he did what could be done to show men the boundary between the sayable and the unsayable, and to delimit what Peter Strawson calls "the bounds of sense." This was best done, in practice, by using examples concerned with comparatively "unimportant" topics: for instance, from philosophical psychology and the foundations of mathematics. But, in his "At Homes," Wittgenstein would let the discussion go much further afield—into aesthetics or literature, Freudian psycho-analysis or religious belief—so that, in Fr. Barrett's new collection, we find him discussing such matters as the extraordinary difficulty of saying anything meaningful about God. Religious language, he declares again and again, cannot offer us any kind of a "picture" or *Gleichnis*: otherwise, we should forever be lapsing into rubbish—"Are eyebrows going to be talked of, in connection with the Eye of God?" And all this Wittgenstein says, not in the spirit of an unbeliever, but rather in the tone of one whose sincere religious belief eludes all verbal expression. The continual impression Wittgenstein himself gave was that of a man struggling inarticulately to overcome the problems created by the limitations of literal discourse.

Perhaps poets might somehow possess the power Schopenhauer had claimed for musicians: namely, the power to convey insights which could never be literally uttered. (I recall his asking, on one occasion, "How on earth does A—— think he can understand Blake? Why, he doesn't even understand philosophy!") Perhaps the "ethical," though inexpressible in "direct discourse," could after all be hinted at in some less "representational" way. At any rate, he never gave up the attempt. Though, even in his last years, he still seemed to believe what he had said as early as the *Tractatus*—namely, that whatever belongs to the realm of "the higher," whatever has "value," lies outside the boundaries of the utterable—he continued, like Kierkegaard, to seek some alternative way of *conveying* what could not be *stated*. And, since he himself was a man of strong moral passions, it is not surprising to find that, away from the formal lecture-room, he exemplified in his own person (however unwillingly) that human tendency *gegen die Grenzen der Sprache anzurennen* which was, in his eyes, one manifestation of the fundamental ethico-religious impulse.

WE HAVE NOW stripped away the layers of Wittgenstein's public philosophical reputation. In this way, we have arrived at the "spiritual attitude" (the phrase is Engelmann's) that informed the whole of Wittgenstein's thought. Engelmann characterises it as a "wordless faith," having affinities not only in Kierkegaard, but also in Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. Whatever exists in the world of facts, and can accordingly be "stated" or "represented" by the regular use of language, must *on that account alone* be dismissed as irrelevant to the deeper questions of ethics and religion. So, at this deepest level of all, the realm of facts and the realm of values were—for Wittgenstein—completely dissociated.

Is this as far as we can go? Or might we, perhaps, penetrate behind this absolute dichotomy of facts and values, to some yet deeper layer of thought? Rationally speaking (I believe) this is the end of the road; and I shall take this as my starting-point shortly, in reconstructing an account of Wittgenstein's intellectual development. Yet, particularly in the letters to Engelmann, there are hints that—for Wittgenstein personally—something else may have underlain that fundamental, irreducible dichotomy.

We could follow up these hints in either of two directions, psychological or sociological—by looking more closely either at Wittgenstein's own personal make-up, or at the historical setting within which his mind was formed. Psychologically speaking, one can certainly say this much: that, whether or no Wittgenstein could have offered any further justification *in principle* for dissociating the realm of facts from that of values, he *did not succeed in his own life* in creating any effective correspondence between them. In his letters to Engelmann, he several times reports thoughts of suicide. He writes repeatedly in tones of self-disgust about his own "lack of decency" (*Unanständigkeit*); and he hints at emotional pressures which it was equally difficult for him to suppress or to sublimate. On 11 October 1920, he writes:

> At last I have become a primary-school teacher, and I am working in a beautiful and tiny place called Trattenbach. . . . I am happy in my work at school, and I do need it badly, or else all the devils in Hell break loose inside me. How much I should like to see you and talk to you!!!!! A great deal has happened. I have carried out several operations which were *very* painful but went off well. *I.e.* I may miss a limb from time to time—but better have a few limbs less and the remaining ones sound.

Whatever the cause, he was still struggling in 1922. He wrote again in 1926, "Anyway, I am not happy, and not because my rottenness

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troubles me, but within my rottenness." And, even in 1937, he is writing from Trinity College, Cambridge, "God knows what will become of me."

Still: to grope after a source for Wittgenstein's deepest intellectual attitudes in his own personal temperament or make-up would probably betray us into unprofitable and irrelevant speculations. (As he says to Engelmann in a letter written from England, in the summer of 1925: "How could I expect you to understand me when I barely understand myself!") In any event, one can find many parallels to Wittgenstein's fundamental positions among his Viennese predecessors and contemporaries. Some of these precedents Erich Heller has already touched on in his essay in ENCOUNTER [September 1959], and in his book, *The Disinherited Mind* (1959). Others are coming to light, as scholars begin to turn their attention to the Vienna of the 1890s and 1900s.

The extensive connections and analogies linking Wittgenstein's thought to that of Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Karl Kraus, Weininger and Mauthner, Hertz and Boltzmann (to mention only a few) are a subject about which I have learned much from conversations with Mr. Allen Janik; but they would demand another complete essay—and one by an intellectual historian at that. So let me, at this point, set aside all questions of psychology and sociology, and embark instead on the second half of my original task: attempting to reconstruct the development of Wittgenstein's thought from the inside out. Let us accept the "wordless faith" of which Engelmann writes, as the central, original strand around which everything else grew. What sense can we then make of the stages through which Wittgenstein passed, in the development both of his philosophy and of his broader ethical ideas?

PUTTING ALL our new pieces together, what picture will emerge of Wittgenstein's intellectual development? To begin at the beginning: it is the picture of a young man born, not into the Austro-Hungarian nobility, but into the *haute bourgeoisie*—specifically, into one of the leading musical and intellectual families of Vienna.[4] He grew up in a circle of men among whom the literary and philosophical concerns of the time were commonplaces. For Viennese intellectuals of the 1890s and 1900s, the ideas of Schopenhauer played the same sort of role that those of Sartre did in the Paris of the late 1940s and '50s: even if there had not been frequent allusions to Schopenhauer in Wittgenstein's writings one could, for this reason, guess at *The World as Will and Representation* as one likely starting-point for his thought.

It is the picture, also, of a young man of severe intellectual tastes and deep reserve, struggling to maintain his personal integrity in the face of obstacles, both within himself and in a disintegrating society. The feeling that the world of facts is *inherently valueless* was one element in the widespread pessimism of the time—it recurs, for example, in the philosophy of Karl Jaspers and other Existentialists. In Wittgenstein's case, that feeling became something of an obsession: if values were not "out there," in the world of facts—he concluded—then they could not be "representable," or "sayable." In this way, he restored to the facts/values dichotomy something of the purity it had had in the writings of Kierkegaard.

(To many English-speaking philosophers, this element of "Post-Kantian Existentialism" in Ludwig Wittgenstein comes as a surprise. Yet, in many respects, he was a true child of the culture within which he grew up. If we consider him too much against his later, Cambridge background—comparing his views, *e.g.*, with those of G. E. Moore and Russell—we risk overlooking this fact. For Russell, Frege and Moore exerted their influence on an intensely serious young man whose intellectual preoccupations had already been largely formed in the Vienna of his youth. Only if this is understood at the outset does his subsequent development come into focus.)

Wittgenstein was formally educated as a physicist and applied mathematician. This training did nothing to distract him from his fundamental philosophical interests. Instead, it sharpened his analytical skills, and showed him a way of putting Schopenhauer's basic insights on a stricter and more formal basis. The period from 1890 to 1910 was a phase in the history of science during which theoretical physicists had the problem of "representation" in the centre of their minds. It was the period of Duhem, Poincaré, and Mach; and above all—for an understanding of Wittgenstein's development—it was the time of Heinrich Hertz and Ludwig Boltzmann. In his book, *The Principles*

[4] The conductor Bruno Walter (as Allen Janik has pointed out to me) speaks in his autobiography of the Wittgenstein household as having been the outstanding social focus, in the Vienna of his time, for cultural and intellectual discussions. Philosophical topics entered very actively into these discussions: notably those associated with the names of Kant and Schopenhauer. For instance, Bruno Walter reports having had conversations with Gustav Mahler, in which he expressed admiration for Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*; and this led Mahler to give Walter the complete works of Schopenhauer as a present for Christmas 1894!

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of Mechanics (1894), Hertz had faced again the same basic question that had perplexed Immanuel Kant a hundred years earlier: "How is a formal, axiomatic theory of nature (such as Newton's dynamics) *possible at all?*" His answer had consisted in showing how the language of Newtonian dynamics is first articulated into a system, and then put to use as an instrument for "representing" the motions of material bodies. Boltzmann extended this account to the whole of physics. From a scientific point of view, all that could meaningfully be asserted were linguistic "representations" of the relevant physical phenomena: for the physicist, the "values" we attach to these phenomenon play no part in their "representation."

Wittgenstein was deeply familiar with these views. Boltzmann's suicide frustrated Wittgenstein's hope of studying with him, but the pages of the *Tractatus* echo with phrases—"logical spaces," comprising "ensembles of possibilities" etc.—which have roots in Boltzmann's generalised thermodynamics. So, by the time Wittgenstein encountered the new symbolic logic of Russell and Frege, he was already well on his way to restating the "transcendental" problem of Kant and Schopenhauer, using the more formal terms made possible by Hertz and Boltzmann. His evident purpose was to extend their analysis, yet again, to embrace language-as-a-whole; and so to demonstrate, in an exact form, what Schopenhauer had characterised less formally: *viz.* the limits to the scope of "linguistic representation."

THIS TASK DEMANDED a new intellectual instrument, which would demonstrate, in general terms, the relationship of which Hertz and Boltzmann's "representation" was a special case. (This general relationship would be the *Verbindung der Sprache mit der Wirklichkeit* referred to in Wittgenstein's later conversation with Waismann.) He found his instrument in the symbolism of the "first-order logical calculus," as developed by Russell and Frege; and he used it, not simply to improve formal logic for its own sake, but as a means of tackling the "transcendental" problem. The formal symbolism of mathematical logic was to be the means of demonstrating how, by "making for ourselves pictures of facts," we discover the *Verbindung* between language and reality.

Looking back at the *Tractatus* with the eyes of historians, accordingly, we may describe its fundamental programme as follows: it was to solve the "transcendental" problem, by using the symbolism of the new "propositional calculus" to extend Hertz and Boltzmann's analysis of scientific language, and apply it to language-as-a-whole.[5] Seen from this point of view, the writing of the *Tractatus* completed, in an apparently final way, the central philosophical task with which Wittgenstein had been preoccupied. After this, he could no more go on working at philosophy than Hugo von Hofmannsthal could go on writing lyric poetry.[6] And, for the next eight years, we find him working as a gardener, a schoolmaster, an architect ... as anything but philosopher.

MEANWHILE, the *Tractatus* fell into the hands of the *Wiener Kreis*, and rapidly became a "classic" of positivism. For Moritz Schlick and his associates had very different concerns from Wittgenstein. They were influenced less by the Kantianism of Hertz, and the transcendental theories of Schopenhauer, than by the critical empiricism of Mach and Avenarius. Their misreading of the *Tractatus* was a pardonable misunderstanding, reflecting the very different philosophical attitudes with which they themselves had approached Russell and Frege's new logical symbolism. It was not until 1927 that—after several years of frustration—Schlick finally succeeded in organising a series of meetings with Wittgenstein; and only then was it apparent just how radically Wittgenstein himself opposed the new "logical positivism."

There is a touch of irony about their first encounters. After the initial meeting with Schlick, Wittgenstein reported to Paul Engelmann, "Each of us must have thought that the other was crazy." At subsequent meetings, Wittgenstein was unwilling to discuss philosophy, and insisted on reading poetry to the members of the Circle: especially the poems of Rabindranath Tagore. Only gradually did he gain enough confidence to engage in philosophical discussions on frank and equal terms. Even so, he found this much easier with Schlick and Waismann than with Carnap and the more fervently positivistic members.

The differences separating them were, after all, real enough. Within the philosophy of mathematics, conversations could proceed in a reasonably constructive spirit, and most of the

[5] I have discussed the relationship between Hertz and Wittgenstein in greater detail in a paper called "From Logical Analysis to Conceptual History," included in a forthcoming collection of papers on *The Legacy of Logical Positivism for the Philosophy of Science* (ed. Stephen Barker and Peter Achinstein, Johns Hopkins Press).

[6] I am once again indebted to Mr. Janik, who has drawn my attention to the importance of Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Chandos Letter* (1902)—another explicit statement of the intrinsic limitations of language—for an understanding of the background to the *Tractatus*.

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discussions Waismann reports were in this general area. Once they went further afield, disagreements arose. For instance, we see Schlick pressing an empiricist point of view about perception, in the tradition of Locke, Hume, and Mach:

> You say that the colours form a system. By that, do you mean something logical, or something empirical? Suppose, for instance, that someone spent his whole life shut up in a red room, and could only see red. . . . Could he then say, "I see only red, but there must be other colours also?"

Wittgenstein's reply echoes Kant's earlier reply to Hume, *viz.* that all perception involves the formation of a judgment:

> I do not see red, rather I see *that the azalea is red*. In this sense I also see, that it is not blue. . . . Either there is a state of affairs, which can be described, in which case the colour *red* presupposes a system of colours, or alternatively "red" means something quite else, in which case there is no sense in calling it a colour.

The deeper source of these disagreements soon became apparent to Wittgenstein. Although the logical symbolism of the "propositional calculus" had been well-adapted for discussing mathematics, its successes there had distracted attention from the difficulties which arise when one attempts to apply it to the remainder of language. As he remarked on 22 December 1929:

> In constructing symbolic logic, Frege, Peano and Russell always had their eye on its application to mathematics alone, and they never gave any thought to the representation (*Darstellung*) of real states-of-affairs (*Sachverhalte*).

In the *Tractatus*, for instance, he himself had been too readily satisfied with a formal analysis of *language-as-representation*, and had paid too little attention to the ways in which formalised representations are *put to use* in real-life linguistic behaviour. Even in physics (as Hertz had shown) a mathematical system can be applied to problems in the real world, only if we assume also definite procedures for relating mathematical symbols with empirical measurements. So it had been an error to take the existence of some self-explanatory and universal *Verbindung der Sprache und der Wirklichkeit* for granted. On the contrary, the crucial problem now became, "By what procedures do men *establish* links between language and the real world?"

To arrive at a "language" suitable for the expression of "propositions," accordingly, we must do more than "make for ourselves pictures of facts." In the last resort, our language acquires its meaning from the procedures by which we give our utterances definite uses in our dealings with the world: not from their inner articulation alone, nor from any essentially "pictorial" character in the utterances themselves. So the writing of the *Tractatus* had not completed Wittgenstein's task. His earlier solution of the "transcendental" problem—his earlier account of the scope and limits of language—had been given in terms of a "picturing" relation which (as he saw now all too clearly) had been at best a helpful metaphor. Now, he was faced with the complementary task, of showing how *any* linguistic expression—whether "pictorial" or not—acquires a linguistic significance, by being *given a use* in human life.

This was the starting-point for the characteristic investigations of Wittgenstein's later period. His concern was no longer with the formal "structure" of language, or with any supposed similarity of structure between "propositions" and "facts." In physics, there might be special reasons for giving a direct, "pictorial" representation of phenomena; but elsewhere there is less reason to regard the "propositions" of our language as "pictures" of "facts." From now on, Wittgenstein focused his attention instead, on *language-as-behaviour*—on the pragmatic rules that govern the uses of different expressions; on the "language-games" within which those rules are operative; and on the broader "forms of life" which ultimately give those language-games their significance.

The heart of the "transcendental" problem thus ceased (for Wittgenstein) to lie in the formal character of linguistic representations: instead, it became an element in "the natural history of man." Unlike Kant, who forever resisted any move that threatened to turn the discussion of philosophy into "mere anthropology," Wittgenstein came to see the philosophical task as one of human self-understanding—as he used to say, "Language is *our* language." Yet, for all this shift of focus, the deeper preoccupation of his later years remained the same as that of his youth: to complete the task begun by Kant and Schopenhauer. He still saw his central tasks as being (*i*) to delimit, from within, the boundaries of linguistic expression; and (*ii*) to show how the human tendency *an die Grenze der Sprache anzurennen* can lead one, either—as in Moore—into a philosophical *Geschwätz* which confuses conceptual issues and empirical ones, or alternatively—as with Heidegger—into a religious attempt to articulate

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the essentially unverbalisable. I recall his remarking at one of his "At Homes":

> Sometimes, we go into a man's study and find his books and papers all over the place, and can say without hesitation: "What a mess! We really must clear this room up." Yet, at other times, we may go into a room which looks very like the first; but after looking round we decide that we must leave it just as it is, recognising that, in this case, *even the dust has its place.*

So that same humane and cultivated Viennese who had begun, as a youth, by mastering the mechanics of Hertz and the thermodynamics of Boltzmann; who had gone on, in his twenties, to play a leading part in the development of symbolic logic; who had abandoned philosophy at the age of 30, in favour of other, humanly-more-valuable occupations—that same man found himself, at 50, exhorting his hearers to reflect more carefully on the ways in which children do learn (or might alternatively learn) the standard patterns of behaviour within which our language has a practical function, and on the metaphysical confusions that can flow from any failure to keep these practical functions of our language clearly in mind. Yet, for all its seeming changes, his long intellectual Odyssey had been directed along a single, constant compass-bearing. A man could obey the Socratic injunction, *Know thyself*, only if he came to understand the scope and limits of his own understanding; and this meant—first and foremost—understanding the scope and limits of language, which is the prime instrument of human understanding.

THAT DEEPER CONTINUITY in Wittgenstein's thought is reflected in the loyalty and admiration he retained, throughout his whole career, for Heinrich Hertz. It was from Hertz's example that he first learned how progress might be made in solving the "transcendental" problem. It was to Hertz he would return, in the late 1940s, for the classic description of philosophical perplexity: *viz.* to the passage in the Introduction to Hertz's *Principles of Mechanics*, where he diagnoses the confusions underlying the nineteenth-century debates about the nature of *force* or *electricity*:

> Why is it that people never in this way ask what is the nature of gold, or what is the nature of velocity? Is the nature of gold better known to us than that of force? Can we by our conceptions, by our words, completely represent the nature of any thing? Certainly not. I fancy the difference must lie in this. With the terms "velocity" and "gold" we connect a large number of relations to other terms; and between all these relations we find no contradictions which offend us. We are therefore satisfied and ask no further questions. But we have accumulated around the terms "force" and "electricity" more relations than can be completely reconciled amongst themselves. We have an obscure feeling of this and want to have things cleared up. Our confused wish finds expression in the confused question as to the nature of force and electricity. But the answer which we want is not really an answer to this question. It is not by finding out more and fresh relations and connections that it can be answered; but by removing the contradictions existing between those already known, and thus perhaps by reducing their number. *When these painful contradictions are removed, the question as to the nature of force will not have been answered; but our minds, no longer vexed, will cease to ask illegitimate questions.*

THERE WE CAN leave our historical analysis of Wittgenstein's intellectual development. A more balanced and technical account of his philosophy would, of course, have paid far closer attention to his detailed arguments: for instance, to his method of "truth-tables," his generalised theory of "propositional functions," and his treatment of necessary propositions as "tautologies"; and likewise to his later analysis of meaning as "use," his polemic against "private languages," and his views about the relation of "language-games" to "forms of life." But my aim here has been to give, not a *balanced* account of Wittgenstein's thought, so much as a *connected* one. I have tried to show that, in his eyes, these detailed, technical investigations were not isolated, separate, self-sufficient exercises in symbolic logic or behavioural semantics, but rather so many natural consequences of a single, deeper, continuing argument.

To say this is not to label Wittgenstein, baldly and without qualifications, as a post-Kantian existentialist. To do that would be as grotesque a caricature as labelling him—without further qualification—a mathematical logician, a logical positivist or a linguistic analyst. For the man was all of these things in part, and none of them in his entirety. Being a Compleat Philosopher, he resists pigeon-holing in the intellectual slots that men of narrower, Procrustean minds devise for categorising their fellow-academics. Even at its shortest, a fair summary of Wittgenstein's position must reflect not only his separate, technical contributions to philosophy, but also the interrelations which explain why those contributions were significant for him.

One might, in this way, arrive at some such summary as the following. Ludwig Wittgenstein entered philosophy with both intellectual and ethico-religious preoccupations: the former

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derived from the transcendental enquiries of Kant and Schopenhauer, the latter inherited from Kierkegaard and kept alive by Tolstoy. The two groups of preoccupations together focused his attention on the scope and limits of linguistic expression; and his concern with this problem took four successive forms.

First, as a young student of applied mathematics, he hoped to solve this "transcendental" problem by generalising the ideas of Hertz and Boltzmann. Next, he found in the new logic of Frege and Russell an instrument—and a symbolism—with the help of which (he believed) one could demonstrate the scope and limits of language-in-general. The outcome of this attempt was his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

Returning to philosophy after a break of some years, Wittgenstein had second thoughts about the *Tractatus*. Even in mathematics (he now saw) the deeper problems require one to consider not the inner articulations of mathematical calculi, but rather the rule-conforming behaviour by which such calculi acquire some external relevance. (This is the burden of the conversations with Waismann and Schlick.) Finally, at Cambridge, in a philosophical situation dominated by G. E. Moore, he generalised his analysis yet again, with the aim of demonstrating how the meaning, scope, and limits of *any* symbolic representation—linguistic as much as mathematical—depend on the relations by which men link it to a wider behavioural context.

The "meaning" of any utterance was thus determined, for the later Wittgenstein, by the rule-conforming symbolic activities ("language-games") within which the expressions in question are conventionally used; and these symbolic activities in turn drew their significance from the broader patterns of activities (or "forms of life") of which they were a constituent element. The final solution of Wittgenstein's initial, transcendental problem then consisted in coming to recognise all the multifarious ways in which "forms of life" create a context for "language-games," and how these in turn delimit the scope and boundaries of the sayable.

SUCH A SUMMARY has one main virtue: it emphasises the *continuity* in Wittgenstein's thought, from the conversations in his father's drawing-room back in the 1890s, right up to the last Cambridge lectures and "At Homes" in 1946 and 1947. Yet it also raises two further questions, one historical, the other philosophical. Let me pose the philosophical problem first.

1. At the very outset, I argued, Wittgenstein's two main philosophical preoccupations—"representation," and the problem of "the ethical"—were related, yet distinguishable. The conclusions of the *Tractatus* had the apparent merit of satisfying both preoccupations at the same time; for the symbolic mapping of *die Grenze der Sprache* which the *Tractatus* provided effectively thrust the whole of ethics, values, and "the higher" outside the boundaries of the sayable, and so reinforced his original Kierkegaardian attitude. From 1930 on, we find him still taking up the same ethical standpoint, yet in a new philosophical context; and it is not clear that his new account of *language* will continue to support his *ethical* point of view.

He criticises Schlick's *Fragen der Ethik*, for instance, as follows (17 December 1930):

> Schlick says that theological ethics has two approaches to the Nature of the Good. According to the shallower interpretation, the Good is good, because God wills it; according to the deeper interpretation, God wills the Good, because it is good. In my view, it is the first approach which is the deeper: good is, what God commands. For this blocks the way to any explanation of "why" it is good; while the second approach is the shallow, rationalised one, which operates "as if" that which is good could be given some further intellectual basis. The first approach declares clearly, that the Nature of the Good has nothing to do with the facts, and so cannot be explained by any proposition.

Wittgenstein goes on to ask, "Does speech play an essential part in religion?" In answering this question, he seems at first glance to be anticipating his later general account of "language-as-behaviour":

> I can well imagine a religion in which there are no doctrines, so that nothing is spoken. Clearly, then, the essence of religion can have nothing to do with what is said—or rather: if anything is said, then that itself is an element (*Bestandteil*) in religious behaviour (*Handlung*), and not a *theory*. . . .

"Ah, yes!", we are tempted to say, "the 'language-games' of religion derive their meaning from the religious 'forms of life' in which they are elements."

At this point, the basic difficulty begins to emerge. For Wittgenstein immediately goes on:

> Further, no question accordingly arises, whether the words used are true or false or meaningless. Religious utterances are no sort of *likeness* (*Gleichnis*); otherwise one would have to express them also in prose.

Here, the use of the word *Gleichnis* looks backward to a "representational" view of language, rather than onward to the behavioural semantics of the *Philosophical Investigations*.

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Later on, Wittgenstein will warn us against assuming that *anything* in language derives its truth, falsity, or meaningfulness merely from being a *Gleichnis*; and will show us, rather, that *all* language is meaningful, on account of being *ein Bestandteil der Handlung*. By the time the final transition is complete, he will have abandoned entirely the contrast between literal, descriptive utterances (language-as-*Gleichnis*) and ritual, performative speech (language-as-*Handlung*); yet, by this final step, he will have dismantled also the very criterion for distinguishing the "sayable," which language can encompass, from the "transcendental," which the nature of things renders inexpressible.

To state the resulting problem:

> In this second phase, Wittgenstein apparently implied that ethics and religion have "forms of life" of their own, within which ethical and religious "language-games" become—in their own ways—as verbalisable, as meaningful, and even as true-or-false, as any others. So was he not compelled, by his own later arguments, to abandon the dichotomy between the expressible (or factual) and the transcendental (or ethical)?

From the conversations on religious belief included in Fr. Barrett's collection, it is clear that, to the end, Wittgenstein remained as puzzled as ever about the character of religious discourse. Yet the formal writings of his later years touch on this subject only in isolated aphorisms—odd, parenthetical phrases such as "(Theology as grammar)". They give no explicit answer to the central question, whether religious discourse, too, comprises a legitimate system of meaningful language-games. Meanwhile, plenty of modernist theologians today are happy and ready to use Wittgenstein's later method as the basis for a theological counter-attack, and to analyse religious discourse as *ein Bestandteil der religiösen Handlung*.

LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN

SO MUCH for the chief philosophical question left unanswered in these latest Wittgenstein books.

2. My final, historical question has to do with the sources from which Wittgenstein drew the material for his later philosophical teachings. How, I would ask, did he arrive at his later view of semantics, as part of "the natural history of man"?

One might be inclined to retort: "Why should he have had to get the material from anywhere? Why should he not have thought it up for himself? After all, his experience as a schoolmaster in the 1920s would naturally have redirected his attention to *language-learning* as a fruitful source of philosophical examples; so did he need any further outside source of ideas and illustrations?" This reply is fair enough, so far as it goes. Yet, when we recall how much can be learned by putting the *Tractatus* back into its historical context, we must surely keep an open mind, and be on the lookout for possible historical sources of the material used in *Zettel* and the *Philosophical Investigations*.

In any event, Wittgenstein's later trains of thought were not without contemporary parallels. I myself, for instance, happened to read his newly published *Zettel* in alternation with L. S. Vygotsky's book, *Thought and Language*[7] —originally published in Moscow in 1934—and the experience of turning between one book and the other set my head ringing with intellectual echoes. In so many ways, the theoretical parallels, the similarities in general intellectual attitude, even the tones of voice of the two men

[7] See the English translation: L. S. Vygotsky, *Thought and Language* (M.I.T. Press, 1962). Vygotsky's discussion of the relation between thought and inner speech finds a close parallel in Wittgenstein's remarks on the same topic in *Zettel*, paras. 100ff. Some of Vygotsky's aphorisms also have a strongly Wittgensteinian tone: *e.g.*, "A word is a microcosm of human consciousness," and "A thought may be compared to a cloud shedding a shower of words."

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were too close to be entirely independent. Yet Vygotsky's book was written in Russia in the early 1930s, by a pupil of Pavlov who could scarcely have known, or been known to, Wittgenstein personally. So let me just end this essay by drawing attention to one curious unremarked coincidence, which may turn out to have some historical significance at just this point.

ON THAT DAY in the spring of 1927 when Wittgenstein's sister Margaret (Mrs. Stonborough) finally brought Schlick and Wittgenstein together, two other guests were also present. As the editor of Engelmann's memoir and Waismann's notes, Brian McGuiness mentions them in passing; but he evidently did not think them worth inquiring about, nor did he find a place for their names in his index. There they remain, embalmed in the text—like the anonymous "person from Porlock," who interrupted Coleridge's poetic fantasy about Xanadu—referred to (in deprecating parentheses) as "Professor Bühler, the psychologist, and Mrs. Bühler."

Who, then, were the Bühlers? A full answer to that question would be another essay in itself. For Karl Bühler was not just one academic psychologist among others. On the contrary, he was one of the chief founders of the modern tradition in development psychology: that tradition of research on language and intellectual development, of which Vygotsky and Jean Piaget have been distinguished later exponents. (Vygotsky refers extensively to Karl Bühler's book, *Die geistige Entwicklung des Kindes*, which was published in 1927.) Still less was Charlotte Bühler a mere *Frau Professor*. She was an original psychologist in her own right, and some people considered her the more formidable intellect of the two. (Her own book, *Soziologische und psychologische Studien über das erste Lebensjahr*, was also published in 1927.) On top of all this, Karl Bühler was a major contributor to modern linguistic theory: in his *Sprachtheorie* (1934), for instance, he analysed the process of linguistic communication with great sublety and discrimination.

To anyone interested in historical origins of Wittgenstein's later ideas, I would therefore say: "Don't overlook the Bühlers." For anyone living in Vienna in 1927 who was interested in "the natural history of man"—and, particularly, in the roles of language within broader human "forms of life"—could hardly avoid considering the psychological and linguistic ideas of Karl and Charlotte Bühler.[8] And, although it remains possible that Wittgenstein arrived at the positions presented in his *Philosophical Investigations* and *Zettel*, without any knowledge of the work being done at this very time by his sister's friends, the resulting coincidences would surely be rather remarkable. Given all this, one may ask, was the Bühlers' presence at Margaret Wittgenstein-Stonborough's house, on that day in 1927, a simple coincidence? Or did Ludwig Wittgenstein himself also know the Bühlers personally, study their work, and—like Vygotsky—learn something of importance for his own later work from their contributions to developmental psychology and linguistic theory?

[8] Professor Theodore Mischel of Colgate University has confirmed, in conversation, the significance of Karl Bühler's work for an understanding of the later Wittgenstein. The whole controversy over so-called "imageless thoughts," in which psychologists of the Würzburg school were involved just before and after World War I, led Bühler to concentrate on precisely those topics—language as the bearer of intentionality, meaning as consciousness of rules rather than images, etc.—that Wittgenstein later put to such good use in philosophy.

In picking on Bühler for emphasis here, I am of course taking for granted—as being already well established—the reference to the later Wittgenstein of Jastrow, Koffka, and Spranger. As Robert Vogelin of Yale has pointed out, Eduard Spranger actually published in 1914 a highly successful book, in the neo-Kantian tradition of "characterology," with the title of *Lebensformen*, i.e., *Forms of Life!* By 1930, this book had reached the 7th edition and sold some 28,000 copies; so that Wittgenstein can hardly have been unaware of its existence when he borrowed the title for his own purposes.

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THEATRE

The Impubic Beard

By John Weightman

I RECENTLY had the strange experience of seeing, on the same day, *The Sleeping Beauty* as done by the Festival Ballet at the Ionic Theatre in Golders Green, and Michael McClure's notorious play, *The Beard*, at the Royal Court. As it happens, *The Beard* contains a sleeping beauty, Jean Harlow, who is awakened not by a chaste kiss on the brow from a prince whose eloquence is all in his arms and legs, but by a sharp jab between the buttocks from Billy The Kid, who squirts precise, obscene proposals from the side of his mouth, like so much tobacco-juice. Yet both situations are poetic, and it is debatable which is the more unreal. Now that all words and gestures are permitted on the stage, it is clear that obscenity has its own rhetoric and that actors have to cheat about sex, as they cheat about killing or drinking. Imagine a very with-it drama, in which the principals had actually to copulate, once nightly and twice on Thursdays and Saturdays. This would face many actors with a problem that they have never had to cope with in real life, and even the best endowed of the others would not always be sure of rising to the occasion. It seems obvious that the laws of our animal nature are going to set a limit to what can be done in the flesh. The ultimate obscenities—provided, of course, the present trend continues and is not reversed—will be reserved for the cinema, or at best for prophetically named one-night stands.

It is very interesting to live in a period when all the public taboos are being removed, but the results of the liberation are not always quite what one might have expected. For instance, which is more sexy—a pretty blonde girl taking off her stockings and panties and spitting out four-letter words, or a silent ballerina in a tutu, twinkling across the stage on her points, weaving the air with her arms, bowing, swaying and spinning in apparent defiance of all the normal restrictions of the body? For some mysterious reason, it is the ballerina who makes one catch one's breath and produces that tingle of lyrical energy which is most closely connected with sex. However pretty Miss Billie Dixon may be in the role of Jean Harlow, however artfully she says her lines, however loudly she moans in the final orgasm, she is not—begging her pardon—as intimately exciting. To use the key-word of *The Beard*, she is not sexually "divahn," as the ballerina is. If the author intends her to be a refrigerating parody of sex, a rather repellent symbol of the plastic American glamour-puss, this would make sense. But I am not sure that he holds clearly to this intention, if he has it.

As I UNDERSTAND *The Beard*, it is a kind of sexual encounter in the void which owes a lot to the Theatre of the Absurd. The "overture" by Mark Boyle's Sensual Laboratory creates a sensation of cosmic space by combining the howling of an unearthly wind with images of drops of oil running over coloured glass. I counted ten minutes of this, and was in a slightly hypnotised stupor at the end of it. Then the stage lights went up and revealed the two American folk-figures, Jean Harlow and Billy The Kid, sitting on a *causeuse* against a white background. She was got up as an expensive floozy and he was a dandy with long chestnut hair and gleaming black boots. Each was wearing a token, goatee beard about three inches long. At first I thought these beards must be a deliberate irrelevance, like the bald prima donna in Ionesco's play of the same name. Then it occurred to me that there is only one sense in which women, as well as men, can be said to have beards. Perhaps the symbol implied that these two mouths were talking genitals, like the loquacious vulvae in Diderot's *Les bijoux indiscrets*. Billy The Kid kept bringing out a telescope, extending it to its full length and putting it to his eye, and this seemed to complete

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the erectile reference in his case. And the *dialogue des morts* consisted of a repetitive, rhythmical, verbal duel, in which the Female appeared to be trying to present herself half-heartedly as a complex, elusive individual, while the Male, with patient amusement, cut through her nonsense and waited for her final surrender.

I confess I couldn't always make imaginative sense of the text, and I suspect that it often goes beyond the Theatre of the Absurd into the pure randomness characteristic of the Surrealists and of their imitators in the American underground cinema. At times there seemed to be a message and, indeed, in a recent television interview, McClure claimed that he wanted to break through the armour of convention by which most people are surrounded. Billy The Kid kept repeating that he and the Female were alone in eternity, with no one watching, and were therefore free to do exactly as they pleased. This is presumably the meaning of "divahn"; if there is no God, each individual can suppose he is his own God, and he can feel himself to be bound by none of the social laws governing speech or action. In so far as the characters were delineated, this thesis appeared to be irrelevant, because Harlow was held back by nothing but female contrariness and the inadequacies of her bird-like mind. Her language and demeanour were those of the prostitute who long ago lost any feeling of right and wrong in sexual matters. As far as one could tell, she was resisting Billy's advances just because he was the *only* man, or because she had to hold out to keep the play going. Therefore, the *Huis Clos* business had no philosophical or genuinely psychological foundation, unless we were meant to understand that, in the sexual comedy, the Male always argues to some extent on the level of ideas, however trumped up and inappropriate they may be, while the Female replies on the level of purely animal caprice. But here again, the implications were uncertain.

Another puzzling feature was the insistent use of the same few obscene terms, not in their literal sense but as expletives or insults. Now, to employ a sexual word in this way is not, strictly speaking, to be "free." It is deliberately to violate the social taboo, and indeed to recognise its force by treating it as something sacred that is worthy of violation. I seem to remember that, at the time of the *Lady Chatterley* trial, Professor Richard Hoggart explained to the judge that it was quite normal and proper to use the native English word for sexual intercourse: "One fucks," as he charmingly put it. He was quite right, of course, if we are determined to demythologise language, but I doubt whether, even now, anyone but a resolutely enlightened intellectual would use the term neutrally in speaking to his wife or mistress. At any rate, in *The Beard*, the present participle of the verb is employed adjectivally in the folk manner, that is as a substitute for poetry. The point about obscenity (when it is not simply a group solidarity sign) is that it indicates the presence of a poetic emotion which is not being adequately translated into words, but merely being signalled as present through the use of a numinous cliché. As regards literary statement, swearing, however powerful the emotion that accompanies it, is literally "blankety-blank." A "free" and "divahn" person could not swear, because he or she would use language consciously and purposefully and would be above the social involvement and mental confusion that endow the word "fucking" with its sacred quality. Therefore, the linguistic bravado of *The Beard* surely defeats its apparent purpose.

THE ACTION MOVED, by recognisable stages, from the repose of the beginning to the final paroxysm. First the Male, to emphasise the point that he "liked her meat," grabbed the Female's arm. Then he bit her toe. Then she was persuaded to take her stockings off. Then she parted with her panties, which the Male, by now dangerously virile, tore to shreds. And all the time the obscene terms were repeated and the same phrases kept recurring, like obsessive statements in a dream, and passing back and forth from one to the other.... "Before you can pry any secrets from me, you must first find the real me. Which one would you pursue?" I may as well admit, as evidence of the peculiarity of human nature, that the only erotic thrill I got from the performance was provided by the American pronunciation of the word "pursue"—*purhsoo,* which struck me each time as being remarkably sensual. Well, the Male "purhsoo'd" to such good effect that, in the end, the Female was in his arms and his part of the *causeuse*, now about to turn, I thought, into that fabled 18th-century piece of of furniture, the *fouteuse*. But as the lights dimmed and coloured fireworks began to play on the backcloth, instead of possessing her or subjecting her to his pleasure, he meekly knelt down and made the gesture of ministering to her, while she responded noisily. Did this mean that his show of virility had been as phoney as her sexual charm? Or simply that the other possible endings, which would have seemed more logical, would not have been do-able on the stage, even in a late-night performance? The spectator was left stroking his own beard in reflective wonder.

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NOTES & TOPICS

London Commentary

Ideology & Style

ANYTHING WHICH Mr. Richard Crossman says these days is news. Anything Mr. Anthony Wedgwood Benn says is also news, though in a muted, down-column fashion. Anything they both contrive to say in approximate, if accidental, harmony is a mild sensation. So when ex-B.B.C.-producer Benn and ex-propaganda-warfare-expert Crossman turned their attention to television, and thought aloud in public places about the perils of this medium which was only an infant during their own irresponsible youth, Shepherds Bush shook like an aspen. And although, with an American election intervening, it is hard to remember what both were saying, the effort is worth it. The Wilson Government does not have so many ideas that we can afford to drop the ones that are tossed to us. Besides, Mr. Heath, too, has lately joined the communications ball-game, using a private speech to an audience of journalists to make specific, even technical, criticisms of the way British newspapers handle the dissemination of political news, themes, and personalities. By the next election, the parties should have a policy for newspapers and television, if for nothing else.

During the autumn's speech-making, there have been several private fights going on in corners of the bar. They may safely be ignored. For instance, the Prime Minister is said to be mad at the B.B.C. because a satirist once called him a liar, and because, and because.... It will be a beguiling chapter in his own and other people's memoirs, but I can wait till then. The worries of Messrs. Crossman, Benn, and Heath are at a more serious level. For them, the media have become, in the literal meaning of the Latin, "things in the middle" which are meant to facilitate but somehow contrive to inhibit the direct, easy communication that a politician ought by the light of nature to enjoy with the people who vote him into (and out of) office.

Thus Mr. Benn:

> Virtually the entire output of the B.B.C. is produced under editorial conditions. The subjects, handling, and people are chosen by the staff to fill in programme slots which have been predetermined quarter by quarter.... There is no publishing done by the B.B.C. on radio or television. Nobody (except in party political or election broadcasts) is ever allowed to develop an argument in his own way, and at sufficient length, to confront the public with what would be the broadcasting equivalent of a book.... Somehow we must find some new way of using radio and television to allow us to talk to each other.

Thus Mr. Crossman:

> In five minutes on radio, you can get across quite a complicated idea; whereas a five-minute TV interview under normal conditions merely leaves the viewer with a vague impression of the speaker.... Why? Because in this kind of interview the visual image on the viewer's screen, so far from adding to the message which radio communicates to the listener, actually distracts attention from what is being said. The fault, I suspect, lies in the first place with the producer, who feels he must popularise what he regards as a dull "must" subject....

Thus Mr. Heath (attacking newspapers, this time, for their reluctance to carry direct, television-style interviews with politicians):

> If the press itself is unable to match the other media in affording direct communication between politicians and the public, then it cannot be surprised if increasingly politicians go to radio or television and ignore the newspaper.

There were, of course, other issues raised in all three speeches. Mr. Benn (of the Ministry of Technology) thought more room should be found on television for technical but economically vital subjects like containerisation and telecommunications. Mr. Crossman (the parliamentary reformer) had his own technical concerns with how the televising of Parliament should be managed, once he has bullied his more retiring colleagues into agreeing to it. And Mr. Heath had his own political reasons (which might evaporate rapidly were he in power) for criticising the ease with which the Government's public relations machine can gull political journalists who lack specialised knowledge in any one sphere.

But the preoccupation which all three politicians hold in common is their sense that, in spite of their own not infrequent appearances to the multitude through the mass media, they have lost their power to *fertilise* the people. Once, they feel, people looked up to their politicians like hungry sheep: sometimes they were fed, sometimes not, but the expectation was

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there. Now, the grazing is so good that the sheep never bother to look up at all.

When politicians take this wistful tone, one likes to locate the precise age of gold which they are trying to recapture. On 28 October 1871, Mr. Gladstone entered in his diary: "My expedition to Greenwich, or rather, Blackheath. I spoke 1h. 50m.; too long; yet really not long enough for a full development of my points. Physically rather an excess of effort. All went well, thank God!..." John Morley comments in his biography:

> It was one of the marked scenes of his life. In the cold mist of the October afternoon he stood bareheaded, pale, resolute, before a surging audience of many thousands, few of them enthusiastically his friends, a considerable mass of them dockyard workmen, furious at discharge or neglect by an economising government. He was received with loud and angry murmurs ominous of storm, but curiosity, interest, and a sense that even a prime minister should have fair play prevailed. His rich tones and clear articulation—and Mr. Gladstone had studied all the arts for husbanding vocal resources—carried his words beyond the five or six thousand persons that are commonly understood to be the limit of possible hearers in the open air. After half an hour of struggle he conquered a hold upon them that became more intense as he went on—touching topic after topic, defending all that had been done for the reform and efficiency of the army, denouncing extreme opinions on the Education Act, vindicating the ballot bill, laughing at various prescriptions of social quackery—until at the close of a speech nearly two hours long, he retired amid sustained hurricanes of earnest applause.

Numerous developments, both political and technological, over the past hundred years have lifted an occasion of that kind into the realms of high romance. Politicians, communicators, and others will all fasten on different nuances in the passage to express the difference between then and now. Mr. Crossman might note that 110 minutes is longer than the B.B.C. has ever allowed him at one gulp; Mr. Benn might pity the old man's dependence on that pre-technological instrument, the human voice. An American election manager would think what a wonderful commercial could be made of Gladstone felling a tree; and a cynic might protest that there was nothing particularly democratic about the Blackheath occasion, for the views of dockyard workers were of much less economic, political, or psephological account to a mid-Victorian government than they are to a contemporary one.

Yet the one word which best describes Gladstone's encounter with the Blackheath crowd is the fashionable one: "tactile." The absence of microphones controlled the size of the meeting and its behaviour. The noisy were silenced by the greater desire of the majority to hear, and the crowd pressed in round the single, vulnerable human figure so that the occasion was not just the speech (which was no doubt reported in the papers next day at a length which would satisfy even Mr. Heath) but the interplay of speaker and crowd. In TV, 20th-century politicians thought they had been given a way of projecting themselves, their ideas and their mannerisms, closer to the hearts and minds of the people than had ever been possible before. They would be Gladstones again, and more than Gladstones, in popular impact if not in power of intellectual coordination. But they forgot that however often and sincerely they surrendered themselves to the camera, as Mr. Hubert Humphrey did when to prove his "humanity" he made an election commercial in the company of his retarded grandchild, the viewer did not give himself with the same abandon to the set.

There are many reasons for this: the "cooling" effect, described by McLuhan, and implicitly accepted by Crossman in his account of his family's non-reaction to horrific Viet Nam newsreel shots; the bombardment of information and entertainment which the serious and not-so-serious reader and viewer is now suffering; the British people's awareness (itself fostered by TV) that in a world perspective, the for-

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Maurice Wiggin, *in* The Sunday Times

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tunes and notions of British politicians do not actually matter very much. In the present Government and Opposition there are several people quite intelligent and objective enough to analyse these developments, and their effect on political life. Indeed, some former colleagues of theirs long ago decided that they would not any longer attempt to be politicians, in the charismatic Gladstonian sense, but would pull the levers of power from the Prices & Incomes Board or other touchline positions.

Those who remained in Parliament, dependent on the franchise, could tolerate a situation in which they needed the public more than the public needed them, just so long as no one else was any more successful than they at triggering off political responses and swaying popular loyalties. They could even congratulate themselves on the outcome of liberal welfare capitalism, which furnishes the citizen with ample inducements to lead a contented but essentially private life, and encourages him to leave the ever-more-complex task of running the country to the most plausible group of experts which presents itself. But 1968 has been the year in which politicians, home and foreign, discovered that the power to sway men and women by direct human contact was no longer a parliamentary prerogative. The leaders of the generation which has grown up with television, whether they be student rebels, poets on the reading circuit, or Underground movie-makers, have successfully recaptured, even at the price of technical amateurishness, some of that sense of a live audience which 20th-century communications technology has destroyed. They are in the skin game rather than the power game, which makes them particularly difficult for a modern politician—or university vice-Chancellor—to understand.

FIGURATIVELY, THIS GENERATION has in the past few months voted *"Cohn-Bendit oui, Benn-Crossman non."* One need not take the ideology too seriously. Commanding the ear of the people, as Mr. Gladstone's political career demonstrated, is a question less of ideology than of style. The successful 1960s style seems to demand a display of unforced coolness towards the media, except as a source of occasionally useful information—a coolness which any earnest politician, who has lived by media and through media and sometimes on media for decades, has great difficulty in managing. If there is a break in the circuit of communication between politicians and electors, the fault is at least as likely to lie here as in the over-assiduous chaperonage of B.B.C. producers.

Christopher Driver

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Living Death

On Dr. Lifton's "Hiroshima" — By GORONWY REES

WHAT WOULD one think if the end of the world came and it passed one by? Even more, how would one make sense of what happened, and come to terms with the experience, so as to find a basis for continued existence?

No doubt there are other periods as well as our own in which it would have been quite natural to ask such questions. We are not the only people who have witnessed the miracle of death and resurrection, or wanted to know what they meant; how eagerly the disciples hung upon Christ's words when he emerged from the tomb. But most of those who have endured such an experience have not left any records behind them. If there were any survivors of Sodom and Gomorrah, we do not know what they said or what they felt like. We only know what happened to Lot's wife, when curiosity made her turn and watch the fires that consumed the Cities of the Plain.

In our own time, however, there have been literally millions of men and women who have witnessed scenes no less terrible and have lived to tell us what it was like. Indeed, so many cities have perished, so many narrowly escaped, so many have been and still are threatened, that it would not be unreasonable to regard the entire living generation of mankind as a race of survivors who, if they still live, only do so under the daily menace of ultimate extinction.

Future historians, if there are any, may well ask how it was possible for men and women to make themselves at home in such a world, by what reasoning, by what dreams, by what illusions, they managed to make it tolerable or intelligible to themselves, by what means they overcame the fears, anxieties, and strains which such a situation must inevitably provoke. That they have done so so far is fairly clear, but not many of them are conscious of the means by which this has been achieved, and indeed there are many who would deny that for them any such problem has ever arisen. Yet, at some level of consciousness or other, it would seem impossible that it has not.

Death in Life[1] is a study of a community, the *hibakusha* or survivors of the atomic bomb explosion at Hiroshima in August 1945, who experienced a calamity which exceeded men's worst possible imaginings of what the future might hold for them; and its author, Robert Jay Lifton, quite understandably believes that its findings have an interest and significance for all who wish to try and understand the way we live now.

It should be said at once that Professor Lifton is quite exceptionally well qualified for the task which he has undertaken. He holds the chair of Research into Psychiatry at Yale University, has a medical degree, and is a student both of politics and sociology, particularly as they apply to the Far East; his recently published book, *Revolutionary Immortality: Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Cultural Revolution* (Vintage Books), shows how closely he has observed the march of events in China. *Death in Life* was written when he had already spent seven years in Japan, and his knowledge of Japanese, and of Japanese culture patterns, was sufficient to enable him to establish direct personal communication, as well as through a scientifically trained interpreter, with the 375 *hibakusha* whom he interviewed, in some cases at great length, over a period of several months.

These interviews provide the chief interest of his book. For all Professor Lifton's knowledge and authority, and the cool detachment and lucidity of his exposition, it would be possible at times to quarrel with the interpretation which he places on some of his material. Indeed, this is almost inevitable in an enquiry

[1] *Death in Life: The Survivors of Hiroshima.* By ROBERT JAY LIFTON. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 65s. Random House, $10.00.

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of this kind, which can never hope to achieve the level of demonstrative proof. But he never distorts or strains his evidence, and for this we should be grateful, because the interviews themselves present a quite extraordinary picture of the human spirit under conditions of intolerable tension and stress. Mr. George Steiner (in *The New Yorker*) has professed to disappointment because that picture, while extraordinary, is not necessarily a novel or unfamiliar one. Perhaps not; these survivors of infernal pains remain recognisably human even in the depths of their distress. But there are certain fields of enquiry in which novelty is not what we look for, or value most; it is the depth, intensity, and a kind of awful and agonised confusion, of the experience which Dr. Lifton describes which give his book its distinction.

IN ESSENCE, THAT EXPERIENCE consists of a triple encounter with death, both as a physical and a psychical phenomenon, of which each phase has its own particular and distinctive features. What perhaps astonishes and fascinates us most in the interviews is the infinite variety and multiplicity of the disguises which Death assumes, as if there were no limit to his inventiveness. He displays himself like some great impersonator, never at a loss for some new part to play in order to insinuate himself into men's consciousness, and yet beneath all his disguises there is never really any doubt about who their terrible visitant is.

For his first appearance, he chose to show himself in all his naked terror, majesty and beauty. In Dr. Lifton's view, on that August day, he added a new dimension to our concept of death. His entrance was all the more annihilating because it came without any warning, and broke upon men and women who were totally unprepared for his coming, for Hiroshima had escaped all the air attacks which were already devastating Japan. He announced himself in a searing and blinding flash of white light, followed immediately by a withering blast of all-consuming heat. Then, equally suddenly, complete and utter silence; in every respect, dead silence. This was followed by an immense detonation, which came as if from many miles away, and on its heels a huge and overpowering blast of air and a succession of shattering noises, each apparently disconnected with one another. Then there formed in the sky an enormous mass of dense cloud which slowly shaped itself into the form of a monstrous mushroom: it sprang out of a maelstrom of boiling clouds which unfolded and discharged themselves in showers of black rain. All this took only a moment, and in that brief space of time the bomb totally destroyed everything within two miles of its hypocentre, and caused deaths variously estimated between 78,000 and 200,000 or between 25% and 50% of the population of Hiroshima. To a survivor looking down at the city, it seemed as if Hiroshima not merely no longer existed, but never had existed. It was as if it had never been.

SUCH AN EVENT had never previously occurred in the history of the world. For the *hibakusha* it was an instantaneous confrontation with death in the most terrifying form it has ever assumed, reducing men and women to a condition of total helplessness and non-entity, annihilating them not merely physically but psychically, so that it was as if the self as well as its environment had been vaporised. The natural order of things had ceased to be, both objectively and subjectively, and in place of living and dying there was now a new form of life which was also a form of death. This was Death-in-Life.

The *hibakusha* responded to this situation by choosing their own death, which Dr. Lifton calls "psychic closing off," that is to say, a rejection of the repulsive and hateful reality which was all that the corpse-laden ruins of Hiroshima had to offer them. In different people it took different forms. A non-commissioned officer devoted himself for four days to an obsessive search, among the swollen and incinerated corpses of the dead and the tortured bodies of the living, for a military code-book and was chagrined to be told, when he found it, that he had been wasting his time. A daughter refused help to a dying father because of the repulsive odour that came from his wounds. *I became a pitiless person*, said a history professor; he had to, because he could not endure the look in the eyes of the dead.

This, then, was the second encounter with death, less apocalyptic than the first, but no less destructive to the psyche. Dr. Lifton emphasises that "psychic closing off" was itself a form of dying, and that for the *hibakusha* it served several purposes. It was a protection against an environment that had suddenly shown itself to be utterly and completely hostile. It was also an atonement to the dead and a means of identification with them and thus relieved the intense sense of guilt inspired by remaining alive when so many others had perished.

This sense of guilt at "survival priority" was one of the deepest and most intense psychological lesions inflicted by the Atom Bomb, and it strengthened and exacerbated all the other feelings of loneliness, abandonment, and desola-

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tion experienced by the *hibakusha*. For them survival brought no joy but only a load of guilt which they carried in a private limbo of their own where they wandered like outcasts cut off equally from the living and the dead.

AND WITH GUILT CAME punishment, no less severe because partly self-inflicted, which constituted the *hibakusha*'s third encounter with death. The punishment took the form of obsessive fears and anxieties connected with "A-Bomb Disease," that is to say, with any or all of the ailments which might reasonably or unreasonably be considered to be due to exposure to the explosion of the Bomb. Dr. Lifton takes great pains to tell us that there is an objective basis for the fears connected with the "A-Bomb syndrome," especially, for instance, in the case of such diseases as leukemia and cancer, in which the effects of exposure to radiation have been demonstrated. But at the same time he emphasises that the available medical evidence with regard to the after-effects upon health of the A-Bomb explosion are extremely inconclusive, confused, and contradictory. It would even be possible to assert that the incidence of verifiable forms of disease, including leukemia and cancer, among the *hibakusha* of Hiroshima, is no higher than would be found among any other comparable cross-section of the population.

For the *hibakusha* themselves, however, such academic refinements are of no significance. For them, "A-Bomb disease" is a reality which manifests itself in a multiplicity of different forms, from leukemia, cancer, and genetic mutations affecting untold generations, through anaemia, cataracts, premature ageing, stunted growth, and loss of sexual potency, down to nose-bleeding, the common cold, lassitude, apathy, and general feelings of debility. Indeed, for the *hibakusha*, any particular manifestation of ill-health, however serious, is less important in itself than as a symptom of that far more deadly malady, "the A-Bomb disease," which he carries within him. Death has laid hands on him, in his innermost and most secret parts, and, even in the best of good health, he can never be rid of the taint. Death is for him an ever-present toxin in the blood, a permanent house guest in the darkest recesses of his being.

Such fears have promoted a mythology which is shared, not only by the *hibakusha* themselves, but those who have never been directly affected by the Bomb. It feeds on personal memories of the first agonising moments of exposure to the Bomb, and of its aftermath, on dreams, fantasies and nightmares, on rumour, mass media reports, on the findings, often contradictory, of scientific investigations, on the renewed fears inspired

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by the American nuclear tests on Bikini atoll. Anything and everything can provide grist to the myth-making mill. But like all myths it has a reality at its root, and in this case the root of all its luxuriant growth is death.

ONE CAN ONLY marvel at the infinite resourcefulness, the fertility of invention, shown by the *hibakusha* in trying to transform the obective reality of the Bomb and its effects (to which indeed a good many more detached and realistic observers have found considerable difficulties in accommodating themselves) into the stuff of living experience. In his description and analysis of the dark and tortuous paths by which this has been achieved, Dr. Lifton, it seems to me, brings us very close to the mysterious processes which are at work at much less tragic and spectacular moments in human life than 6 August 1945 in Hiroshima. He has thrown light, not only on that experience, which was one of the crucial ones of our time, but on many much more ordinary ones which nevertheless may be related to it.

Indeed, throughout *Death in Life*, one is continually driven to wonder what kind of relationship can exist between the experience of the *hibakusha* and those who, whether in Japan or elsewhere, did not and cannot share them. They themselves believe that they were condemned to witness, and suffer, a unique event, from which all others were excluded, just as it excluded them from the rest of human life. Their contempt is reserved for those who specialise in, as they say, "selling the bomb," exploiting it for purposes which are wholly irrelevant to their own experience. Yet no historical event, however exceptional, is really unique, if only because it has a subjective element which is contributed by human beings who are a part of what went before and will come after; only theological events, if they exist, could be said to be unique.

In what way then are the experiences described in this book related to the experiences of the rest of us, who fear the Bomb just as the *hibakusha* do, without having had their direct encounter with it? And does the dropping of the bomb at Hiroshima in fact constitute one of those great turning points in the human consciousness which we associate with certain other periods of history? Professor Lifton believes that it does, and he promises us that in a later study he will attempt to interpret what its significance was. *Death in Life* is a preliminary exercise, a prolegomena to the psycho-history of our times, that is to say, to an attempt to interpret its

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events in the light of the findings of modern psychiatry, and in so doing to add a new dimension to what we have previously understood as history.

I MUST CONFESS to large reservations about the validity of such an enterprise, and not merely because previous exercises in psycho-history have, with few exceptions, tended to create obscurity rather than light. The possibility of psycho-history implies that, over and above the observed events of history, there is something else, a kind of *Spiritus Mundi*, which we cannot observe directly, but of which we can write the biography just as we can write the biography of an individual human being or the case history of a psychiatric patient. These are large assumptions; even so, I should regard the attempt as a noble and possibly a fruitful one and will certainly look forward with the greatest anticipation to the studies which Dr. Lifton promises us.

Until then, however, we must do the best we can for ourselves with *Death in Life* and the speculations which it inevitably provokes. Can we really say, as Dr. Lifton does, that the dropping of the Bomb was a decisive event in the history of human consciousness and, moreover, that we can interpret its significance? Further, can we say that what occurred at Hiroshima was different in kind from, say, such historical events as the destruction of Dresden by conventional bombing, or the mass murders committed in Nazi concentration camps or the final solution applied by Hitler to the Jews?

Professor Lifton, I think, would answer yes to all these questions; first of all, because he regards Hiroshima as the first mass murder of the technological as opposed to the industrial era of history; but even more because of the significance which he attributes to its effects, which was to add a new dimension to our conception of life and death, indeed to abolish the distinction between them and make of living only another, and perhaps even more terrible, way of dying. In this sense, *Death in Life* is not a metaphor but a literal description of the contents of his book; but it might equally well have been called *Life in Death*.

The most striking illustration of Dr. Lifton's claim is the feeling, which seems to have been common to all the *hibakusha*, that by survival they had committed an act of betrayal both to the dead and to themselves, that somehow, by continuing to live, they had assumed a false position, were acting a part. For how could the act of living be reconciled, except as a sinister parody which made life a simulacrum of death, with the reality of everything they saw

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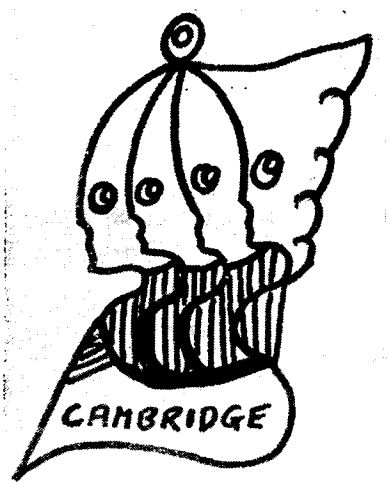

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around them and the images of death that pressed in on them from every side, the swollen and blackened bodies of the dead, the total destruction of the environment which had made living possible at all, the naked forms of *living* men and women from which the bomb blast had stripped not merely their clothes but their skins, the faces so burned that they no longer appeared as human but as incinerated death masks, the blue flames, symbols of the souls of the departed, which licked the phosphorescent corpses? Even more, how could Life, with all that it implies, be reconciled with the overwhelming sense of the presence of Death in their bodies, which carried the irremovable taint of his corruption, and in their minds which swarmed with the terrible images in which Death had revealed himself?

For myself, I am quite willing to believe that such an experience may in fact have, as Dr. Lifton says, added a new dimension to life and death, have changed our consciousness of what living and dying means, only in ways which as yet few of us understand and which may take many years before they fully reveal themselves. Yet perhaps one can notice already in how many ways our own behaviour begins to repeat that of the *hibakusha*. One of their most marked reactions to the Bomb was "psychic closing off," the numbing both of the senses and of the sensibilities to the effects of the Bomb. What degree of "psychic closing off" is to be traced in all of us who, with full knowledge of the Bomb's potentialities, accept its existence and its possible employment as an ordinary fact of daily life, and what consequences can this have for the future evolution of the human species? Another *hibakusha* symptom was "guilt at survival priority." Does this not repeat itself in us in our sense that the Bomb has brought death into the world in new and more terrible forms, has made it the very condition of our existence, and that in such a world we have lost the right to exist or only exist as pale shadows of what we should be? Nor is "selling the bomb" a phenomenon only known to the *hibakusha*. Most of all, perhaps, there are those dark, mysterious, and impenetrable areas of ourselves in which we are all victims of the indefinable fears and anxieties which overshadow the life of the *hibakusha*, so that today it is the commonest thing in the world to hear someone say, during a spell of exceptionally bad weather: "*Of course, it's the Bomb....*" Since Hiroshima, we are all *hibakusha*, and perhaps the greatest value of *Death in Life* is that it is not only the *hibakusha*'s experience which it helps us to understand; it is our own.

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The Way it Was

The Day of the Scorpion. By PAUL SCOTT. *Heinemann*, 42s.
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The Bloater. By ROSEMARY TONKS. *Bodley Head*, 21s.

"BUT OUT HERE, are we ever ourselves?" speculates Sarah Layton, the heroine in *The Day of the Scorpion*, of the British in India. Yet the theme of identity is only one of the strands in this long, complex sequel to Mr. Scott's earlier novel on the decline of the Indian Empire, *The Jewel in the Crown*. The Layton family itself, for example, with the achievements of its menfolk embedded in the civil and military hierarchy of the Raj, may represent the tenacity, perhaps the will, that enabled a few thousand British officials and soldiers to rule India. But Sarah Layton, in whose character, or rather in whose heart, several of the novel's main preoccupations converge, believes that the British presence in India is purposeless, perhaps irrelevant.

Mr. Scott's distinction is that he treats these matters with compelling seriousness and integrity. The period of which he writes is 1942–44, and the times are such that the Indians no less than the British feel unsure of what is to come. Teddie Bingham, Sarah Layton's romantic brother-in-law, falls in action in a skirmish on the Assam border, but he dies fighting not only the official enemy but Indians from his own regiment who have defected to the Japanese under the banner of Subhas Chandra Bose. Similarly, the arrest of Hari Kumar, an Anglicised Indian, accused with a gang of hooligans of raping his English girl-friend, Daphne Manners, brings about such a traumatic concern in all who have anything to do with the case that conventional ideas of the rulers and the ruled are transformed.

It is fitting that this episode remains at the centre of Mr. Scott's tableaux, for it illustrates the process of decline with great relevance, linked as it is to the "Quit India" riots after the effortless arrest of the Congress leaders in August 1942 which opens the narrative. Less than two years later, as the novel ends, not only is Independence probable, but also the decision to divide India into two mutually antagonistic successor states. Behind them, the former rulers will leave their cantonments, and their railway stations and all the detritus of their civilisation. And it is the measure of Mr. Scott's mastery of his great theme that he quite convinces one that it was here in India at this time that "the British came to the end of themselves as they were."

The structure of *The Day of the Scorpion* is complex and demanding, yet such is the drive of the narrative, with its almost Faulknerian deployment of detail, and its insight into the lonely, the sensitive and the undemanding, that character and situation converge to represent the dying civilisation with peculiar force. Particularly interesting is Merrick, the non-pukka police superintendent who interrogates Hari Kumar in detention, and who, almost alone in the novel, believes in the will, in the validity of the imperial idea, distrusting the self-defeating, idealist paternalism of British rule:

> The permutations of English corruption in India were endless—affection for servants, for peasants, for soldiers, pretence at understanding the Indian intellectual or at sympathising with nationalist aspirations, but all this affection and understanding was a corruption of what [Merrick] called the calm purity of their contempt. . . .

Comparisons with Forster's famous novel are inevitable. There, the mysterious Marabar Caves represented that India that was beyond the British comprehension, but at least there is hope in Forster that good-will may redeem a historically impossible situation. Mr. Scott is more explicit, and less speculative, writing of a time when the exhausted rulers themselves have ceased to believe in their message, and when there is thus no message to communicate. Even Merrick, perhaps significantly, is savagely wounded as he fights the external hordes on the Assam hills. The metaphor of the title does help one to comprehend. Legend says that the scorpion, in the middle of the flame, stings itself to death. The reality is that the heat destroys, and the arching tail is merely a reflex.

SOLZHENITSYN's first novel, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, was based on his eleven years in prison, labour camp and exile. The book, of course, was part of Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation campaign, but the present persecution of the writer by the authorities shows that at least they realise his genius transcends any attempt by any political system to exploit his work. Like *One Day*, Solzhenitsyn's new novel, *Cancer Ward* (which has been banned in Russia), is based on the writer's own experience, for he was seriously ill during his exile following the years in the labour camp and before his "rehabilitation" in 1957. This volume is longer than his earlier novel, and the pub-

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lishers tell us, moreover, that a second, self-contained instalment will "follow shortly."

In any case, perhaps the most important achievement of *Cancer Ward* is that it brings a new intensity to the literary device of presenting a prison or a hospital as a representation of a corrupted world. Many of the characters in *Cancer Ward* are faced with the question of whether they will live or die under the azure skies of Soviet Central Asia in the mid-1950s; the monstrous tumours which the medical staff treat with a variety of almost equally monstrous remedies grow with a life of their own, and no treatment can offer the certainty of cure. Everything is in the balance, and a capricious fate hangs over everyone.

Two opposed characters rise out of the episodic narrative. There is the self-reliant Kostoglotov, who fought in the war (like Solzhenitsyn), who has suffered in the camps, and who has been condemned to perpetual "administrative" exile. In spite of his apparently hopeless position, his condition continues to improve and he takes as much personal freedom as he can grasp. Opposed to him is Rusanov, a Stalinist bureaucrat, who has carefully insulated himself from life, who denounced his comrades in what he calls that "excellent and honourable time, the years 1937 and 1938," and who under sedation is oppressed by guilt and fear that he in his turn will suffer the same "administrative" fate—if he survives—that he has given to others. His agony is compounded by the first moves of the anti-Stalin campaign in far-away Moscow which is removing the senior bureaucrats to whom he has given his life. His son is even named Lavrenti Pavlovich after Beria. Yet his daughter, determined to make a career as an "official writer," is already following in the spirit of the old ways as she sizes up the new, post-1953 balance of forces:

> Generally speaking, you have to be flexible, you have to be responsive to the demand of the times. This may annoy you, father, but whether we like it or not we have to attune ourselves to each new period as it comes. I saw a lot in Moscow. I spent quite a bit of time in literary circles—do you imagine it's been easy for writers to readjust their attitudes over these last two years? Ve-ry complicated! But what an experienced crowd they are! What tact! You can learn such a lot from them!

Not all Solzhenitsyn's enemies have been found in the Soviet bureaucracy.

With Kostoglotov and Rusanov, Solzhenitsyn has created two characters which it will be hard to forget. And although the overt symbolism

All the World*
will be talking about

THE KNOWLEDGE REVOLUTION

by D. N. Chorafas

Top scientific, technological and managerial talent has become the world's most precious capital resource, and is the new and future wealth of any country. The U.S.A. knows this; and makes certain that it gets—and keeps—as much of it as it can. What are the socio-economic, educational and political factors behind the Knowledge Revolution that will put a flagging Britain and Europe back into equal competition with the U.S.A. before they take us over?
Here for the first time, is an analysis of the malaise *behind* the technological gap and the brain drain, a survey as important to our understanding of the problem as was the Brooking Report, *Britain's Economic Prospects*, to our economists. 30s

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ALLEN & UNWIN

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of *Cancer Ward* expands immeasurably the significance of what the novelist is saying, ultimately the book is in the great tradition of Russian realism, the characters and the setting to be appreciated for their own sakes. This is certainly not a Platonic fantasy of totalitarianism, as some have suggested, and neither is the traditional quietism of Tolstoy advanced as an answer to the questions raised by existence in the cancer ward. Yet having said that, one must record that over nearly all the participants stands the memory of the man Kostoglotov refers to as *him*. Never mentioned by name, and no longer commanding the Party and State, he remains almost a physical presence as the patients re-live their past fears and sufferings under an incubus which no spiritual radium treatment can ever exorcise. It is a burden which Solzhenitsyn makes manifest as perhaps no other Russian writer has yet done, as he leaves us wondering whether his patients, any of them, will ever fully recover.

Yukio Mishima, possibly the best known and certainly the most prolific novelist of the new Japan, is a virtuoso writer, a master analyst of both the human heart and the Japanese character. *Forbidden Colours* is a long, sometimes rambling, but never dull chronicle of the life and loves of an aging writer, Shunsuke, who comes to dominate a young homosexual disciple, using Yuichi as an instrument of revenge against the unworthy past. An interesting story, perhaps inspired by the legend of Wilde's Svengali-like dominance of the young Gide, for certainly Mishima tends to deliberately draw Shunsuke, who reads and idolises Huysmans and Swinburne, in the well-worn literary mantle of a European *fin de siècle,* Yellow Book decadent.

Yet there are two great qualities in the book which prevents Shunsuke's story from appearing as that of just another boring, bitchy old literary queen who really expects the world to carry his bags for him. In the first place *Forbidden Colours* explodes with a true novelist's vitality as Yuichi's adventures take him into the underworld, homosexual and otherwise, of the Americanised, post-war Tokyo that has emerged from the ashes of the Imperial Way. Soon, Yuichi develops heterosexual friendships as well, with much of the Japanese countryside as a background for his affairs and his developing relationship with his wife. In spite of the claims of Shunsuke, which are never really quite shaken off, the disciple becomes a man in his own right with a quite distinct identity, something which would appear unlikely from the earlier passages of the book.

NIXON is here!

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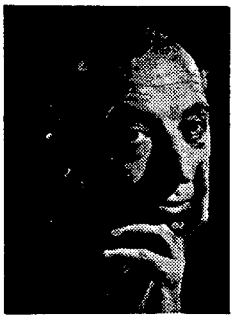
30s



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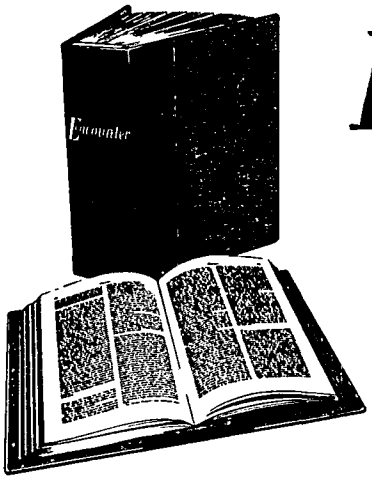
I wouldn't wish to give the impression that Mishima is some sort of inverted Far Eastern Dickens. A great deal of the book is written in a rather sly allusive way which seems to explode much of the apparent seriousness of what the writer is saying on a formal, narrative level, as well as demolishing the Gothic complexity of his over-involved psychological analysis. Emotional suffering, yes, it can be very unpleasant! Performance undoubtedly declines with the coming of age, but who can gainsay the universal validity of love? Although lovers frequently behave badly in their quarrels, their solace in each other is the only experience that really matters, or is it? Hence an interpretation of *Forbidden Colours* as a sophisticated erotic farce is the one that just possibly does it the most justice. Sometimes, too, there are passages of Maughamesque sententiousness:

> That thing called love is very much like a fever, even with the long period of incubation. During the incubation period the various sensations of the malaise await the onset of the illness, when for the first time the symptoms are plain. As a result, the person coming down with a disease believes that the underlying causes of all the problems of the world are explicable in terms of fever. Wars occur: "That's the fever," he says with a gasp. . . .

As with any major creative writer, though, much of what Mishima says in *Forbidden Colours* is best appreciated on a level of ambiguity. What is quite clear is that he is one of the most interesting novelists now writing in any country.

Finally, Miss Tonks' story, *The Bloater,* which never wanders very far away from Hampstead, is a precisely written fable of a girl's delightful dilemma when faced by two suitors. Completely unpretentious, and with a poet's felicitous choice of nearly always the right language to describe the heroine's moods, feelings and kaleidoscopic friendships, there is a perfectly communicated concern with the classic choices of passion and security. The book is shot through with the slang, the clothes, the black humour and the delightful complexities of being in love in London at the present time. This is the way it was.

David Rees



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The Sparrow in the Cage

On the Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia

"A sparrow in the cage
is worth a canary on the roof."
GOMULKA

DURING THE NIGHT of 20–21 August, the Soviet Union and four of its Warsaw Pact allies invaded and occupied the territory of a fifth ally, Czechoslovakia, in order to change the policy of its ruling Communist party. Military preparations for that action had been visibly conducted since early May. Threatening public statements as well as internal information meetings for party activists in the participating states had announced it for more than a month. Nevertheless, both the actual decision to invade and the manner of its execution came as a surprise to most diplomats and other expert observers outside the Soviet bloc—because they had believed that the Soviets were merely bluffing but would shun the political cost of carrying out their threat, and because of the apparent complete lack of political preparations for an alternative Czechoslovak leadership to match the perfect military staff-work.

On one side, it had been argued that the Czech party and government leaders had given the Soviets reason enough for protest and pressure, but no serious cause for armed intervention. They had clearly demonstrated their willingness to keep within the limits of precedent established by past and current Soviet practice (negatively in Hungary, positively in Poland and more recently in Rumania): preservation of single-party rule and loyalty to the military alliance. Even if the details of Prague's domestic and foreign policy continued to displease the bloc's leading power as well as its more rigid-thinking members, would the collective oligarchs in Moscow really risk the evaporation of the remnants of the *détente*, the revitalisation of NATO by a renewed sense of common danger, and the ruin of the impending world conference of Communist parties, merely in order to refuse to the Czechs and Slovaks a degree of domestic autonomy which Khrushchev had, however reluctantly, conceded to the Poles in 1956, and a measure of foreign policy independence which they themselves were currently tolerating on the part of Rumania?

On the other hand, once the Soviets really decided to subjugate a country by force, they could hitherto be relied upon to have their satellite government ready for installation. Yet this time they failed conspicuously to produce the "loyal comrades" who were supposed to have invited their troops, and after days of floundering found themselves forced to negotiate with the very leaders they had arrested on arrival and even to reinstate them at least provisionally. Did not this prove that the top Soviet leadership was almost as much surprised by the invasion as the outside experts—that the crucial decision was a last-minute improvisation, forced on a wavering and divided Politburo by a combination of worried generals, middle-rank *apparachiki*, and frightened hard-line allies in an unforeseeable sudden upset?

There can be no doubt that the Czech and Slovak Communists' experiment in combining controlled liberalisation at home with a striving for limited but real autonomy in foreign policy has confronted the Soviet leaders with their most difficult choice since the fall of Khrushchev. Evidence of division and vacillation in the collective leadership is conclusive, not only for the week preceding the crucial decision, but even after it. More, the decision may be said to have remained incomplete in important aspects for over a month after the invasion. Yet there is, I feel, no evidence whatever to back the hypothesis that the Politburo was overridden by its subordinates in some sudden,

THIS *is the first part of a comprehensive two-part analysis, based on much little-known documentary evidence, of the recent Czechoslovak invasion.* RICHARD LOWENTHAL, *who lectures at Berlin's Free University, is at present in California at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioural Sciences. His recent* ENCOUNTER *articles include "Mao's Revolution" (April 1967), "1917 and After" (October and November 1967), and his famous (and prophetic) critique of the Viet Nam War, "America's Asian Commitment" (October 1965) and "The Vietnamese Agony" (January 1966).*

On the development of the tragic course of events in Czechoslovakia, see also in ENCOUNTER *François Bondy, "Letter from Prague" (July 1966), Anatole Shub, "One Hundred Days" (July 1968), and Kai Hermann, "The Fall of Prague" (November 1968).*

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irrational and therefore unforeseeable upheaval. On the contrary, it can be shown that the decision to occupy Czechoslovakia regardless of political cost, however reluctantly arrived at, represents the culmination of trends in the foreign and domestic policy of the Soviet collective leadership that had been visibly gathering strength for the past two years. As for the political floundering that followed the military *Blitz*, it was due not to improvisation and lack of political planning, but to rigid commitment to a plan which proved to have been based on gross miscalculation.

CLEARLY, AN UNDERSTANDING of the considerations underlying the Soviet decision is of major importance not only for a historical interpretation of the tragedy of Czechoslovakia, but for an appreciation of the nature of the present Soviet leadership and of the factors likely to continue guiding its decisions while it remains in power.

1. The recent trend of Soviet foreign policy has been to give increasing priority to *preserving the cohesion of their East European power sphere* over any attempt to influence developments farther afield, and certainly over the interests of the pro-Soviet Communist parties. While Rumania was regarded as peripheral for that cohesion, the role of Czechoslovakia for maintaining not only the military, but above all the political and economic, unity of the bloc in the face of Western temptation was held to be as crucial in 1968 as it had been for "shielding" Eastern Europe from the lure of the Marshall Plan in 1947. Then, Stalin's flat statement to the Czech government that its acceptance of Marshall aid was incompatible with the Soviet-Czechoslovak alliance had been both the prelude to the liquidation of Czech democracy by the coup of February 1948, and an earnest of Russia's determination to keep all forms of Western influence out of her newly conquered empire. Now, the Soviets have come to regard the possible Czech acceptance of West German credits in a context of improving political relations as a danger comparable to that "colonisation by the dollar" once feared by Stalin—likely not only to undermine their own hold on Czechoslovakia's economic resources, but to set an example of *political reorientation* to other East European states that would end in the isolation of their East German bastion.

2. The Kremlin's fear of the disruptive effect West German economic strength and political contacts might have on the bloc found a domestic parallel in its increasing worry about the encouragement derived by critical Soviet intellectuals from the example of the new Czech freedom of public debate. Corresponding to the foreign policy priority for holding on to Soviet power in Eastern Europe, the chief trend in recent Soviet domestic policy has been the effort to intimidate the critical intelligentsia and restore them to conformist discipline. At home, as abroad, the post-Khrushchev collective has gradually revealed itself as an oligarchy of conservative bureaucrats, primarily concerned neither to force violent, Stalin-style transformations on society nor to meet its contemporary needs by liberalisation, but merely to hold on to its power—partly by stepping up armaments in a framework of economic growth, partly by police measures thinly cloaked in the ideological verbiage of a bygone period. It was pervasive fear of change—that *raison d'état* of an Empire in decline which is also a Police State on the defensive—that finally tipped the balance in favour of military action.

3. It was yet another fear of the Soviet rulers that accounts for their initial political paralysis and subsequent about-face in the days following the invasion—the fear of provoking a Hungarian-style popular rising with local army support and unforeseeable repercussions in the neighbouring countries. Because of that fear (and because of the natural preference of conservative bureaucrats for "constitutional" procedures), they did not wish to overthrow the leadership of Czechoslovakia's Communist party and government by naked force. They expected the *legitimate* organs of party and state to change their leadership once the occupation was a fact! As Soviet and East German statements from the critical days make clear, the invaders' information from their "loyal comrades" was that once the tanks had arrived in Prague, the "Dubcek group" would become a minority and the willing collaborators a majority in the party presidium. President Svoboda would then have to appoint a new government according to the will of the new majority. When that expectation proved wrong, the disoriented Soviets arrested the leading reformers, but could not replace them—not because no collaborators willing to come forward existed, but because they had failed to supply the "legitimacy" that had been stipulated as a condition for the invasion.

Russian Policy in Europe

DURING THE FIRST TWO YEARS that followed the fall of Khrushchev, Soviet foreign policy fully recovered from the double shock it had suffered in 1962–3—by the defeat in the Cuban missile crisis and by the virtual break with Communist China. In 1963, Presi-

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dent Kennedy's offer of a *détente* had been accepted primarily as a breathing space for recovering from a position of weakness. By 1965, the new Soviet leaders were able to launch new initiatives on the basis of a new assessment of their priority interests.

Their basic decision was that the world-wide power competition against the United States in general, and the contest for the balance of power in Europe in particular, would continue, at any rate for years to come, to be of greater urgency than the bitter new rivalry with Communist China. It seems unlikely that Khrushchev's successors ever had serious hopes of a reconciliation with Mao Tse-tung, or even that they count on an effective restoration of the defunct Chinese alliance—as distinct from a more pragmatic form of watchful coexistence with their gigantic Eastern neighbour—after his death. But they seem to have made a realistic judgment that the danger from the East lay in the future rather than in the present. For the time being, it could be met adequately by comparatively limited efforts: *e.g.*, re-engagement in Viet Nam by arms deliveries combined with unmasking offers of "united action" to Peking, improvement of Soviet relations with Japan, deterrence of Chinese threats against India, and intensified para-military training in the Far Eastern border regions.

By contrast, American power was perceived as by far the more immediate threat. It was armed with the superior strategic strength and tactical mobility demonstrated in Cuba, liable to abuse these advantages for world-wide intervention of the Viet Nam and Dominican type, and potentially dangerous to Soviet security in Europe by its alliance with "revanchist" West Germany. The Soviet leaders may not really believe that the American imperialists would deliberately launch a nuclear war, nor that the West Germans would use the *Bundeswehr* for an attempt to reunify the national territory at the risk of national suicide. Still, they regard the link between German territorial revisionism and U.S. nuclear power not only as the one standing challenge to their own military control of Eastern Europe up to the Elbe, but as involving *at least* some risk of *unintended* nuclear war. For that reason, the break-up of the NATO alliance—in effect primarily of the military link between Washington and Bonn—has, ever since 1955, ranked second only to the preservation of the East European *status quo* itself on the Soviet list of priority goals. Yet by 1965, American involvement in Viet Nam combined with the new policies of General de Gaulle to produce an open crisis of the alliance that seemed for the first time to bring the prize within the Kremlin leaders' reach.

Khrushchev's successors thus concentrated their main efforts on catching up with American military power on one side, and on exploiting the crisis of NATO (with a view to the 1969 deadline for its possible dissolution) on the other. Their remarkable achievements in the field of armaments—the approach to parity with the U.S.A. in strategic weapons of mass destruction, and the increase in highly mobile, sea- and air-borne forces for conventional military action at long range—are now a matter of public record. To create incentives for the dissolution of NATO, the Soviets used a two-pronged approach. They launched a major campaign for a "European Security system" that would replace both NATO and the Warsaw Pact, working hard to get the European neutrals as well as member states of NATO interested in a "European security conference" to discuss the project. At the same time, they took active steps to build up a solid power sphere in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean from which they would eventually be able to threaten NATO's southern flank.

THERE WAS, OF COURSE, a certain inconsistency between these various aspects of Soviet policy towards the West. The campaign to end the division of Europe into hostile military blocs by creating an all-inclusive European security system in their place depended for its success on the climate of the East-West *détente*—whereas the speed-up of Soviet armaments and the growing implantation of Soviet power in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean were liable to disturb that climate once their results became obvious. It is a matter of speculation whether this inconsistency reflected imperfect agreement within the collective leadership, or whether the men in the Kremlin were just waiting to see how far their "soft" *détente* diplomacy might get them before their "hard" power ploys became visible. What is certain is that until the turn of 1966–7, they were remarkably successful in both directions. Their switch from the dispersal of political energies and economic resources in widely scattered parts of the underdeveloped world (which had characterised Khrushchev's conduct of affairs down to the Cuban missile crisis), to a heavy concentration of political, economic, and military effort on the Middle East bore fruit both in increasingly close ties with the "progressive" Arab states and in a growing detachment of Turkish and Iranian policy from the West. When the entry of pro-Soviet Communist ministers into the new Syrian government formed by the left-wing of the Baath party was followed by Premier Kosygin's appeal for a bloc of liberated Arab states leaning on Soviet support (launched

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in an address to the National Assembly of the U.A.R. in Cairo, *Pravda*, 18 May 1966), the importance of the critical step from an anti-Western "strategy of denial" in this region to its proclamation as a Soviet sphere of influence was not appreciated in the chanceries of the Western powers—no more than was the significance of the growing Soviet campaign against the presence of the American Sixth Fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean and of the quick and steady increase in the Mediterranean Detachment of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet.

Meanwhile, the campaign for a "European Security System"—a concept first put forward by the Soviets in 1954–5 as an alternative to the creation of a West German Army in the NATO framework—had been revived in 1965 and had enabled Moscow to wrest the diplomatic initiative in Europe from a divided West. Favoured by the virtual absence of American interest and by the immobility of successive West German governments as much as by General de Gaulle's illusion of a Franco-Russian partnership in rebuilding an undivided Europe, it reached a climax in the summer of 1966 with the French leader's state visit to the Soviet Union following the French departure from NATO's integrated military organisation, and with the official formulation of the Soviet programme for European security by the Bucharest conference of the Warsaw Pact.

The two key passages of the Bucharest Declaration proclaimed the need for the general acceptance of the territorial *status quo* in Europe on one side, and a plan for replacing the opposing military alliances by an all-in security system on the other. The first, addressed primarily to the Federal Republic, insisted on its recognition of the legitimacy and permanence not only of the existing frontiers between Germany and her Eastern neighbours, but of the partition of Germany proper. Bonn was summoned to recognise the sovereignty of the East German state and to renounce all constitutional rights in the "separate territory" of West Berlin. The second key passage suggested that this European order should jointly be guaranteed by all European states, East and West, without necessarily excluding American participation in such a pact. It affirmed explicitly the willingness of the member states of the Warsaw Pact to dissolve their military alliance in favour of the new security system if the members of NATO would dissolve theirs. Moreover, if the signatories of the North Atlantic Treaty were not willing to take this final step at once, it suggested a dissolution of the integrated military organisations of both pacts as a first instalment. (This proposal was facilitated by the fact that the Warsaw Pact had no such integrated organisation.)

As Western diplomats recognised at once, the plan contained an even more important pitfall—it said nothing about the network of *bilateral* treaties between the Communist states of Eastern Europe which, concluded at the end of World War II for twenty years, had antedated the Warsaw Pact. The Soviet treaties with Czechoslovakia and Poland had just been renewed in 1963 and 1965 for another twenty years, and a new twenty-year treaty between Russia and East Germany had been added in 1964. Hence Soviet troops could have remained on the Elbe even after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, while the Americans would have had to go home after the dissolution of NATO. The formal sanction of the territorial *status quo* under the Bucharest plan would have been accompanied in effect by the establishment of Russia as the dominant military power on the continent of Europe, and thus by a decisive shift in the world balance of power. But while these considerations caused the Western governments (including Gaullist France) to be wary of the Bucharest proposals as they stood, they seemed to offer at least a starting-point for discussion. On a continent whose peoples were, after twenty years, increasingly tired of its partition and of domination by the super-powers, the fact that the Soviets had come forward with *some* proposal for radical change gave them a *prima facie* political advantage.

The Turn-about of 1967

ALL THE MORE remarkable, then, the effective abandonment of all Soviet propaganda for a mutual dissolution of the opposing alliances since early 1967! The offer to dissolve the Warsaw Pact in return for a dissolution of NATO was still mentioned at the conference of European Communist parties, held at Karlovy Vary in the spring of that year. But it has not, to my knowledge, turned up in any official Soviet document since that time.[1] Instead, the need to strengthen both the military preparedness and above all the political unity of the Soviet-led alliance in the face of the danger from "West German militarism, revanchism, and neo-Nazism" has come to be the predominant concern of Soviet European policy—precisely from the moment that the improvement of relations with the East European Communist

[1] The virtual dropping of the offer was publicly deplored by the Italian Communist leader Luigi Longo in a speech to his Central Committee after the invasion of Czechoslovakia (*Unità*, 30 August 1968).

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states (including the Soviet Union itself) became the priority objective of the new Federal Government of the "Grand Coalition" formed in Bonn in December 1966.

To appreciate the extraordinary nature of the Soviet turn-about, it is necessary to recall the main features of Bonn's new Eastern policy. Abandoning the reservations harboured by previous West German leaders against the East-West *détente*, the new Kiesinger-Brandt government proclaimed that such a *détente*, and its own full participation in it, was the only conceivable framework for any approach to eventual German reunification. Accordingly, Bonn offered to establish full diplomatic relations with all the Communist governments of Eastern Europe, regardless of the "Hallstein doctrine." It declared solemnly that it regarded the Munich agreement of 1938 as null and void (not "from the start," as the Soviet bloc demanded, but because it had been destroyed by Hitler's occupation of the remainder of Czechoslovakia in 1939—a position identical with that of the British government). It maintained the reservation that the frontier with Poland could be finally settled only in a peace treaty, but stopped asserting the continued legal validity of the pre-war frontier of 1937. It offered to negotiate practical measures to improve personal, economic and cultural contacts between both parts of Germany by talks on every level, including the ministerial level, with representatives of East Germany—short only of formal recognition in international law. Finally, it proposed that the NATO allies should negotiate with the Soviets for a mutual reduction of the armed forces stationed in both parts of Germany, and declared itself ready to negotiate a mutual renunciation of the use or threat of force with the Soviet Union and all its allies, including the East German government.

Nor was this reorientation of West German policy a mere diplomatic adjustment without deeper roots. It had been prepared by a steady change in public opinion over the preceding years, and was finally achieved by the entry of the Social Democratic Party into the government. Yet while the new policy was eagerly welcomed by the Communist government of Rumania and aroused considerable initial interest in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria, it was bitterly denounced as a new form of political aggression by the East German and Polish Communists and (after some initial hesitation) by the Soviets. The East German leaders feared that any improvement of relations between Bonn and their Communist allies would eventually lead to their growing isolation in their artificial state. The Polish Communists, remembering their recent conflict with the Catholic Church on the possibility of a reconciliation between the German and Polish peoples, were convinced that anything which weakened the fear of Germany would undermine the Polish people's willingness to rely solely on Russian protection, and with it the basis of their own rule. And the Soviet leaders concluded that Bonn's active participation in the *détente* was a far greater threat to their own security than its former rigidity—because it might isolate their East German bastion, cause differences within their alliance, and reduce the common fear of a "new Hitler" that was its strongest popular cement.

WE CAN NOW SEE WHY Bonn's decision to join the East-West *détente* without reservations became the catalyst of Moscow's decision to turn away from it. So long as the West was divided on the issue, the Soviets could afford to pose as the champions of *détente* and the advocates of an eventual dissolution of both opposing alliances. While they felt reasonably assured of their own power sphere—with the peripheral and partial exception of Rumania—they could exploit the differences in the enemy camp by a flexible, offensive policy. But as soon as the evolution of West Germany offered to Russia's client states an alternative to fear, the Soviets, feeling their hold on Eastern Europe threatened, withdrew into a posture of defensive rigidity. Pressure was brought to bear on Czechoslovakia, as well as on Hungary and Bulgaria, to reject Bonn's offer of normal diplomatic relations. The campaign to paint the Federal Republic as "a hotbed of neo-Nazi aggression" was given preference over the chance to negotiate a mutual renunciation of the use or threat of force, even though Bonn was willing to include East Germany among its partners. By the end of 1967, the slogan of a "European security system" was no longer interpreted to mean an all-round system of mutual guarantees among equals, but a revived mutual guarantee of the victors of World War II against German militarism on the model of the Potsdam agreement. The men in the Kremlin can hardly have deluded themselves into believing that *this* would appear as an attractive alternative to NATO in Western eyes. But once the preservation of their East European power sphere seemed in doubt, they gave it absolute priority over any further attempts to get NATO dissolved.

The Soviet attitude to the internal changes in Czechoslovakia developed above all in this context. The leaders of the CPSU must have been long aware of the inefficiency and growing unpopularity of the Novotny régime. They had no inherent reason to oppose either the implementation of the long-adopted Czech plan for

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economic reform or the fulfilment of the long-standing pledges to rehabilitate the victims of the terror years. But they were worried by the growing pressure of Czech opinion, led by economists, scholars, and writers, for better relations with West Germany; and they rightly feared that a reform régime might be more responsive to those pressures than Novotny's bureaucratic leadership. Hence, while avoiding open intervention at this stage, the Kremlin used its influence in favour of the old incumbents just enough to arouse resentment, and to make their overthrow in January 1968 appear as a Soviet setback. In short, the Soviet preoccupation with West Germany stood at the beginning of the chain of events that ended with the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia.

The Great Fear of Internal Change

THE ABOVE ANALYSIS is open to one serious objection. Viewed from outside, the sudden turn which the Soviets' European policy underwent in early 1967 appears disproportionate to its immediate cause. After all, Soviet control of Eastern Europe, with the exception of Rumania, had been effectively consolidated in the two years following the fall of Khrushchev. The Rumanian infection had not spread; the military capacity of the Warsaw Pact forces had steadily improved; and there had been visible progress in the coordination of bloc diplomacy with regard to the West in general and to the critical issue of attitudes towards West Germany in particular. So far, then, the conditional offer to dissolve the Warsaw Pact in return for the dismantling of NATO (on the silent understanding that the bilateral treaties between the Soviet Union and its allies would be retained) had proved perfectly compatible with the effective strengthening of its cohesion. Why, therefore, should the Soviets regard the mere beginnings of a new West German policy towards Eastern Europe as a sufficient reason to renounce the proven advantages of a flexible diplomacy and withdraw into the bristling posture of a hedgehog?

The answer seems to be that Bonn's new initiative was merely the catalyst for a change in European policy that corresponded to a general tendency then gaining ground within the Soviet leadership—a tendency towards an increasingly rigid disciplinarianism born of a sense of insecurity that had domestic rather than foreign roots.

The team of oligarchs who overthrew N. S. Khrushchev in October 1964 had acted to preserve the stability of their post-revolutionary, bureaucratic régime from the dangerous experiments of an incalculable, dynamic personality. They were conservatives who wished neither to return to Stalin's more violent forms of experimentation nor to run the risks of a bold policy of liberalisation, but simply to hold on to a collective monopoly of control which they regarded as the only guarantee for the steady development of their country's prosperity and power.

The first concern of the new leaders had therefore been to restore the unity and continuity of the party machine and state administration after the Khrushchevian shake-up—to give their bureaucratic constituents renewed security of tenure. Yet within a year it became obvious that the bureaucratic rule they had successfully defended against arbitrary intervention from above was coming under increasing attack by intellectual critics from below. Indeed, these critics were making use of Khrushchev's disclosure of Stalin's crimes to throw doubt on the legitimacy of the whole generation of *apparachiki* who had been his tools—and were still governing Russia. By the beginning of 1966, the Politburo had decided that the critics had to be silenced and the flood of disclosures about the past stopped if Russia was to be made safe for bureaucracy. The heavy sentences pronounced against Sinyavsky and Daniel were one consequence. Another was the new doctrine (endorsed by the 23rd Party Congress) that while there had been a "personality cult" leading to crimes during the later years of Stalin's rule, there had never been any "*period* of the personality cult." In other words, massive terrorism had been a mere marginal blemish during a glorious period of the construction of socialism, and all who had risen to the top in that period could be proud of it. The third consequence was a series of measures to strengthen party control of literature and intellectual life in general, to condemn "unpatriotic" writings and stop their publication, and to launch a major campaign for the "military-patriotic education" of Soviet youth. By then the leaders had apparently come to the conclusion that a chauvinistic glorification of military power was the most promising "ideological" weapon in the struggle against dangerous liberal ideas.

Yet police repression, censorship, and official chauvinism were soon to prove as powerless to stop the spread of critical thought in industrial post-revolutionary Russia under the Communist bureaucracy as they had been in backward pre-revolutionary Russia under the Tsarist bureaucracy. By now, persecution merely served to revive the traditions of social responsibility and individual protest among the Russian intelligentsia and the ties of solidarity between critical writers, students, scientists, and independent-minded party members. At the beginning of

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1967 one group of intellectuals was arrested for circulating a "White Book" on the violations of Soviet law committed in the trial of Sinyavsky and Daniel, and another group for demonstrating publicly against the law on "anti-Soviet agitation" on which the punishment for the publication of critical views was based. Their trials took place at intervals during the following year, while other arrests and trials, less widely known abroad, occurred in Leningrad and other important centres, and above all in the Ukraine. As the victims did not cooperate by pleading guilty, the régime kept its publicity about these cases to a minimum—just as it stifled discussion at the Writers Congress when it met at last in May 1967, after three postponements, and prevented Solzhenitsyn from attacking the censorship from its rostrum. But behind the surface of official unanimity, the leaders were deeply disturbed by these stirrings of a new spirit (as they later admitted at the meetings of the Central Committee and the Moscow City Conference of the party in April 1968).

IT WAS AT HOME, then, that the collective leadership came first to feel on the defensive against the awakening of new forces it could no longer control. It seems plausible that it was the increasingly rigid and conservative frame of mind induced by these developments that caused it to display, from about the beginning of 1967, an anxious authoritarianism in dealing with the outside world that was to lead to a whole series of setbacks. For instance, Russian influence among the Communist parties that wished to remain uncommitted in the Sino-Soviet dispute had steadily grown since Moscow had, in the spring of 1965, relaxed its pressure for an early Communist world conference. Now the demand for a Soviet-dominated world conference was revived—and with it friction with the "neutral" parties. Again, the Russian warning to Egypt in May 1967 about an imminent Israeli "attack" on Syria (which precipitated Egyptian mobilisation and set in motion the chain of events ending in the disastrous June war) seems to have been caused by Moscow's fear that the Israeli reprisal raids on Syria might lead to the overthrow of its shaky protégé government in that country. The excessive fear for the control and cohesion of the East European alliance which the Kremlin displayed in response to Bonn's new Eastern policy was evidently part of the same syndrome: it was based on the same belief in the pervasive power of "bourgeois ideology" to confuse and divide the peoples under Communist rule and even some Communist parties, and on the same exclusive faith in the remedy of insulating the peoples and parties from that danger by strict Soviet control.

The Key Role of Czechoslovakia

GIVEN THAT RESPONSE, it was natural that the Soviet fear of change in Eastern Europe should focus on Czechoslovakia. Being both one of the two industrially most advanced countries of the bloc and one of the two western-most members bordering West Germany, it was considered equally vital for the economic division of labour and for the military and political cohesion of the alliance. Accordingly, a major effort had been made for years to link it with Poland and East Germany by particularly close ties, forming an "iron triangle" of hard resistance to Western temptations. Yet while the Novotny leadership had been a more or less willing partner in that Soviet-inspired policy, the spontaneous development of Czech society had tended increasingly in the opposite direction—towards a revived sense of Central European (as distinct from East European) identity in general, and towards closer economic and cultural relations with West Germany in particular. True, it had not been too difficult for the Soviets (in the early months of 1967) to get Novotny and his team to drop their initial interest in the West German offer of normal diplomatic relations and to sign a new twenty-year treaty with the East German régime instead. But Moscow knew well enough that this decision was hardly more popular with the Czech and Slovak intelligentsia, including the critical elements of the party, than were the economic and cultural policies of the Czech epigones of the Stalin era. Hence, when the Czechoslovak Writers Congress, meeting in June just after the Soviet Writers Congress, developed into a much more open confrontation than the latter between the critical writers and their official ideological supervisors, the Kremlin had obvious reasons of both domestic and foreign policy to side with the Novotny leadership; and when the Middle East war further widened the gulf between the Communist governments and the humanistic intellectuals of Eastern Europe in the following months, Moscow fully approved the harsh measures taken by Prague to muzzle and intimidate its non-conformists.

Yet it was these measures that were to precipitate the final crisis of a régime that had long lost its last ounce of credibility—a crisis that began with the clash between Dubcek and Novotny at the October plenary session of the Central Committee. For years, the Novotny leadership had "approved" economic reform and delayed its execution while Czech industry

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sank deeper and deeper into bureaucratic paralysis. For years they had disavowed the Stalinist fake trials in principle and prevented the effective rehabilitation of their starving victims, not to mention the exposure and punishment of their torturers, in practice. For years they had declaimed about the equality of the Czech and Slovak peoples yet opposed the Slovaks' concrete demands for more effective self-government. Now, in the face of a challenge made from within the party in the name of truth, they were left ideologically bankrupt. Devoid of arguments on which he could have fallen back. Novotny fell back on Brezhnev instead, inviting him to the December session of the Central Committee. But the General Secretary of the CPSU, unwilling to expose his authority in a lost cause, could only procure a postponement of the decision by his appeal for 'unity." On 5 January 1968, Novotny resigned as party leader, and the Czechoslovak Central Committee elected a new presidium with Dubcek as its head.

AT FIRST, the Soviets took a waiting attitude as the flood of disclosures, reform proposals and ideological discussions about a new model of "humanistic communism" swept over the Communist state with the most deep-rooted democratic tradition and the most belated emancipation from the rule of Stalin's stooges. Yet by the end of March, when Novotny had been forced to resign as President and the former Czech collaborators of the Soviet secret police were rapidly losing their positions, the Soviets (and their equally conservative East German and Polish allies) were thoroughly alarmed. By then, the Czech idea of "democratisation" under Communist rule, implying at least freedom of public discussion and dissent, if not of organised opposition, had inspired student demonstrations supported by leading intellectuals in Poland—demonstrations that produced a crisis in the Polish party leadership and were only put down by a combination of police measures with a harsh purge of intellectual life and an anti-Semitic press campaign; and that campaign in turn threatened to undermine Gomulka's position in favour of his anti-liberal, but more nationalist rivals of the "Partisan" faction. In the Soviet Ukraine, the new climate developing on the other side of its Slovak border, communicated through the Ukrainian broadcasts of the Prerov station, was also stimulating discussion among intellectuals. The East Germans found it necessary to ban the import of Prague's German-language newspaper because it had become too attractive to their own critical citizens. Thus following the first open polemics between the strictly controlled East German and Polish press on one side and the newly freed Czech journals on the other, Dubcek was invited to a first discussion with leaders of the "orthodox" parties within the bloc at Dresden—and he failed to reassure them.

For though there was no visible sign of danger to the power of the Czech Communists, and though the Prague leaders affirmed their determination to keep the process of liberalisation under control, to permit no opposition parties and to stay loyal to the Warsaw Pact, they were committing themselves to a concept of free, public debate which had never been tried in any country under Communist rule —not even in Tito's Yugoslavia—with the temporary and reluctant exception of Poland's first year after the events of October 1956. They had so far tolerated the use of that freedom by non-party intellectuals for disclosing the past misdeeds of Soviet officials in their country, for criticising the Communist party's monopoly, and for advocating better economic and political relations with West Germany. And they showed signs of themselves regarding a greater degree of diplomatic independence as both compatible with their obligations under the Warsaw Pact and required by their national interest. That this greater independence might well lead to normal relations with the Federal Republic of Germany was suggested not only by the precedent of Rumania, but by Czechoslovakia's economic situation and by the attitude of her spokesmen at Dresden (and at subsequent meetings with other leaders of the bloc). For they pressed the Soviets with great urgency for a large, hard-currency credit, and while the Soviets remained unwilling to pledge the amount required without prolonged negotiation, the Czechs were equally unwilling to forgo the alternative of obtaining the necessary help from "Western sources," which in practice was bound to mean largely from Western Germany.

Growth of the Soviet Dilemma

THUS EARLY in April, just when the Czechoslovak Central Committee was adopting its new Action Programme, the Soviet leaders decided to mobilise their party against a new main danger: the undermining of the unity of the bloc and of Soviet society by imperialist "ideological subversion." According to a resolution adopted by the Soviet Central Committee on 10 April and to a previous report by Brezhnev to a Moscow City conference of the party, the Imperialists were now afraid of a direct military clash with Soviet might, and were con-

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centrating on the support of "nationalist and revisionist elements" so as to disrupt the unity of socialist countries. As a result, the "ideological struggle" between the two camps had become far more acute. In fact, it was now "the most critical front of the class struggle." A determined counter-offensive against bourgeois ideology was now the principal task of the ruling Communist parties and the precondition for preserving their power. It was in this context that the Central Committee was informed about the Rumanian walk-out from the preparatory world conference of Communist parties in Budapest and about the Rumanian refusal to subscribe to a resolution of unconditional support for the non-proliferation treaty at the Warsaw Pact meeting in Sofia in early March, and also about the Dresden meeting with the Czechoslovak leaders and that it discussed the risk of "anti-socialist tendencies" arising from the evolution of the Prague régime.

It seems unlikely that armed Soviet intervention—the use of *military* force against the *ideological* danger of "counter-revolution"—should have been formally proposed in Moscow at this early stage, though reports that General Yepishev (the head of the army's political administration) had mentioned the possibility in an unpublished speech began to circulate at the time. But a catalogue of demands to the Czech leaders must then have been drawn up, and the need to bring pressure to bear on them in order to "stop the rot" have been endorsed. Pressure, in fact, became very visible in the course of May, following an inconclusive invitation of Dubcek and Premier Cernik to Moscow, and a first collective meeting there of the party and state leaders of the "loyal" allies—without either Czechs or Rumanians. Resolutions of solidarity with the (supposedly conservative) Czech workers' militia, passed by workers' meetings all over the Soviet Union, began to fill the Soviet press; the first Warsaw Pact manoeuvres were started around the borders of Czechoslovakia. It was against this background that Soviet Premier Kosygin paid his visit to Prague and Karlovy Vary, obtained the Czech leaders' agreement to a "staff and communications exercise" on their soil, and discussed once again the problem of hard-currency credits as well as the Soviet desire for a permanent stationing of Russian units on the Czech frontier with Western Germany. No agreement could be reached on either issue. Kosygin became all the more pressing in urging the Dubcek team to slow down their reforms and to unite with the defeated party conservatives against the "anti-socialist dangers." In fact, however, the Central Committee meeting held in Prague in the last days of May came out *both* against the danger that the reform might be exploited by enemies of socialism, *and* against the continuing efforts of the dogmatists to prevent reform. It showed the reformers' determination to pursue their course and remove the compromised leaders by expelling Novotny from its ranks and calling a party congress for September.

By June, the Soviet leaders were thus conscious of being faced with a major dilemma of policy. If the new Czech leaders continued on their "revisionist" road and consolidated their power, as they seemed determined to do, it was foreseeable that (*1*) one of the two bloc countries bordering Western Germany would break out of the rigidly negative policy towards its neighbour imposed by Moscow, (*2*) one of the industrially most advanced of the bloc countries would seek to reduce its dependence on Soviet markets and raw materials and to improve its technology and standard of living by accepting a major Western loan, and (*3*) the bloc country with the most solid democratic traditions would develop a pattern of free discussion and dissent that was unprecedented within the bloc and diametrically opposed to the present trend of Soviet domestic politics. Moreover, it was to be expected that the Czech example, if tolerated, would soon be followed by Hungary, both on the German question and internally, and that its attraction would create so much unrest in Poland and East Germany—not to mention the Soviet Union itself—as to force a reconsideration of the Soviet general line. As the Soviet leaders well knew, the real risk was not that Czechoslovakia might *break away* from the bloc following a "counter-revolution," but that she might *infect* the bloc with the ferment of reform and reorientation.

THE CZECH EXPERIMENT, THEN, had to be stopped. But if it could not be stopped by political means short of armed intervention, the political cost of such an action might also prove very serious—both outside and inside the bloc.

(*1*) The chances of reunifying the large majority of the world's Communist parties under Soviet leadership at a conference later this year would be gone. In fact, the willingness of many important parties to be guided by Moscow might suffer irreparable damage. Independent of that, the attraction and influence of the Communists were bound to suffer gravely, at any rate in the Western world and in all those countries where, striving to win power by the "peaceful road," they had promised to tolerate opposition after an electoral victory. More important to the Soviets, there was a risk that (*2*) the crisis of NATO would be overcome and its vitality wholly or partly restored by the spectacle of Soviet military intervention in the heart of Europe. Gen-

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eral de Gaulle's policy would suffer a major setback, and even the prospects of the "dialogue with Washington" might be affected. But the most serious of all risks was that (*3*) intervention might actually generalise the crisis within the bloc instead of limiting it. If it provoked a popular rising or even organised resistance by the Czechoslovak army, who could foresee the consequences in Hungary or even in Poland or East Germany?

Small wonder, then, that the Soviet leaders hesitated, looking for a way to stop, break up or overthrow the "revisionist" Czech leadership *without* the use of armed force. During June, while the "communications exercise" took place with rather more troops than the Czechs had expected, public attacks in the Soviet press died down. But Soviet and allied diplomats and journalists travelled all over the country, trying not only to feel its pulse, to observe the people's attitude towards the Soviet troops, and generally to replace the Czech secret police reports that were no longer reaching them, but also to encourage working-class opposition to the new course which they still believed must be widespread. But the results were disappointing. Inside the Soviet Union concern about the Ukrainian echo of the Czech discussions became more acute, and even a leading Russian physicist, Academician Sakharov, referred hopefully to the Czechoslovak example in his now famous memorandum. Then, at the end of the month, Soviet alarm reached a new height with the publication in Prague of the "Two Thousand Words." That manifesto, though initiated by non-party intellectuals, was *not* an attack on Communist one-party rule, which its authors recognised as inevitable in the circumstances; but it was a call for pressure from below to get the party to purge from all positions of power the men who had been responsible for the country's economic, intellectual and moral decline. The Soviets and their supporters denounced it at once as the "action programme of the counter-revolution" and prevailed on the Czech party leaders sharply to repudiate it, but in the following days, the Manifesto received strong support from both press and public, including a large part of the party rank-and-file. As the provincial party conferences met on the next two weekends to elect delegates for the national congress, it became apparent that no outside popular pressure would be needed to achieve the substance of the manifesto's demands, because the congress would have a strong majority firmly committed to reform and thorough renewal of the leading cadres.

Richard Lowenthal

(*A concluding article will be published next month.*)

LETTERS

"U.S. Race Paradox"

NATHAN GLAZER [ENCOUNTER, October] may be "a leading American sociologist" but he obviously knows nothing about Black Americans and the situation in which they now find themselves. The ostensibly accurate statistics he uses, gleaned from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of the Census, must be blatant lies. And there is only one acid test I apply to these statistics: reality.

Let us put aside for the moment the terrible truth that the present American government cannot be believed and let us look at a New York City ghetto, which I do every day. Only a fool or a blind man could assert that things are better for the Black American than they used to be. Arguments like Glazer's make me sick and, I submit, they are more evil than any brought forth by the most honest racist. Glazer would have us speculate on the number of teeth in a horse's mouth. If you have the chance, take a look inside that mouth.

IRVING BENIG,
White teacher in a black ghetto

New York City

MR. BENIG'S LETTER illustrates part of the problem I was trying to illuminate. "The present American government cannot be believed" and therefore the figures of the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of the Census must be "blatant lies." The fact that most Negroes in public opinion polls agree that things are better for blacks, as I pointed out in my article, must also be dismissed. Presumably the polls also lie. Mr. Benig knows "reality" through his experience as a white teacher in a black ghetto. Everything else is suspect—even presumably the views of thousands of other white teachers in black ghettos who disagree with him.

One can only imagine the effect of such a teacher—must it not be to reinforce the distorted and disastrous view of reality that now dominates the minds of so many black youths?

NATHAN GLAZER

Harvard University,
Cambridge, Mass.

Arrests in Uganda

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN:

I write these words in sorrow. Rajat Neogy, Editor of *Transition*, and Abu Mayanja, constitutional lawyer and politician, have been arrested and put in detention. So far as we know, this is not a case of detaining someone who has been plotting to overthrow the government. It looks more like a detention of people for being intellectually honest. If I am wrong I hope the Uganda Government will publicly correct this impression, and bring the accused to trial.

I personally know of no two people who have

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contributed more to the intellectual liveliness of Uganda than Rajat Neogy and Abu Mayanja. I did not always see eye to eye with either of them. In fact Abu Mayanja and myself have been on opposite sides in almost every debate in which he and I have taken part in the Main Hall of Makerere. And the differences between us were real. But Uganda's reputation as an open society was secure for as long as there was one Abu Mayanja free to speak out his mind, and one *Transition* leading the rest of Africa in sheer intellectual verve.

There is a sense in which intellectual freedom is indivisible. On a day like this I feel lonely and shaken.

On 9 October 1968—Uganda's Independence Day—an article of mine appeared in a special Uganda supplement of *The Times* of London. It was written at the invitation of the paper. In that article I had occasion to say the following:

> Debates [in Uganda] have gone on in *The People*, that remarkably independent organ of the ruling party, and in *Transition*, the literary and political magazine which constitutes one of Uganda's claims to intellectual leadership in English-speaking Africa. Frank controversy on varied issues continues to be a major aspect of Uganda's intellectual life.

I expressed this faith in *The Times* only the other day. Today I am groping for reassurance that I was not wrong.

I confess these feelings not in any of my official capacities at Makerere, but simply as a person. I say them as an admirer of Neogy and Mayanja, as a person who has been associated with the rise of *Transition* to international stature as the best magazine of its kind on the African continent, and ultimately as a person who has a weakness for intellectual liberties.

Not least, I say these words as a person who has grown to love Uganda over the years, with a deep sense of personal involvement.

ALI A. MAZRUI
Professor of Political Science
Makerere University College,
Kampala, Uganda

[The arrests were made on 18 October. The original grounds were "detention under emergency regulations." On 22 November—*i.e.*, five weeks after the arrests—Mayanja and Neogy were brought before a magistrate and charged with sedition. The charges were based on a paragraph from a letter published in *Transition* No. 37 (the latest number) and written by Abu Mayanja. The paragraph ends with the words: "I do not believe the rumour circulating in legal circles for the past year or so that the Judicial Service Commission has made a number of recommendations in this direction (*i.e.*, the direction of trying to Africanise Uganda's expatriate High Court), but that the appointments have for one reason or another, mostly tribal considerations, not been confirmed. But what is holding up the appointment of Ugandan Africans to the High Court?" The two men pleaded not guilty to the charges. On the issue of bail, Chief Magistrate David Lubogo ruled that the fact that the two men were under detention was not good reason for him not to consider the question of their release pending trial. He granted them bail (10,000/– with two sureties of a similar amount), but the two men were re-arrested as they were leaving the courtroom and taken back to prison. The trial is now scheduled to start on 9 January 1969.—*Ed. Note.*]

AUTHORS

Stephen Toulmin is a philosopher, scientist and historian of ideas. He is the author (with his wife, June Goodfield) of two volumes in Hutchinson's *The Ancestry of Science* series—*The Fabric of the Heavens* (1961) and *The Architecture of Matter* (1962). He was for many years lecturer in the Philosophy of Science at Oxford and a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. He is now teaching at New England's Brandeis University....

THE INTERVIEW with **André Malraux** was conducted in Paris by the special correspondents of *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), among whom were the literary critic Rolf Becker and the political journalists Dieter Wild and Gustave Stern....

Alan Sillitoe (born 1928, in Nottingham) is the author of novels, short stories, and poetry. Among these are *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1958), *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (1959), and *The Death of William Posters* (1964), published by W. H. Allen. A book of short stories, *Gunman, Go Home*, will be published in the autumn by Macmillan, who have just brought out his poems, *Love in the Environs of Voronezh*....

Christopher Driver was until recently Features Editor of *The Guardian*. He is the author of a number of books, including *The Disarmers* (1964). His controversial article on "Why Newspapers have Readers" appeared in the November 1967 ENCOUNTER and "Lord Hill's Libel" in November 1968....

WE REGRET the error in the December ENCOUNTER which incorrectly identified Raymond Aron's interviewer in *La Revolution Introuvable*. It was not, of course, Alain Peyrefitte (the Gaullist Minister of Education during the May revolt), but **Alain Duhamel**....

THE PASSAGE on "The Raglan Quotient" in the December ENCOUNTER ("Guevara, Man & Myth," p. 58) was written by **Richard Boston** whose name was inadvertently omitted....

THE BOOK discussed in **"Column"** in this issue, *The Lure of the Limerick*, is published by Rupert Hart-Davis at 25s....

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